



FOURTH SESSION — TWENTY-NINTH LEGISLATURE

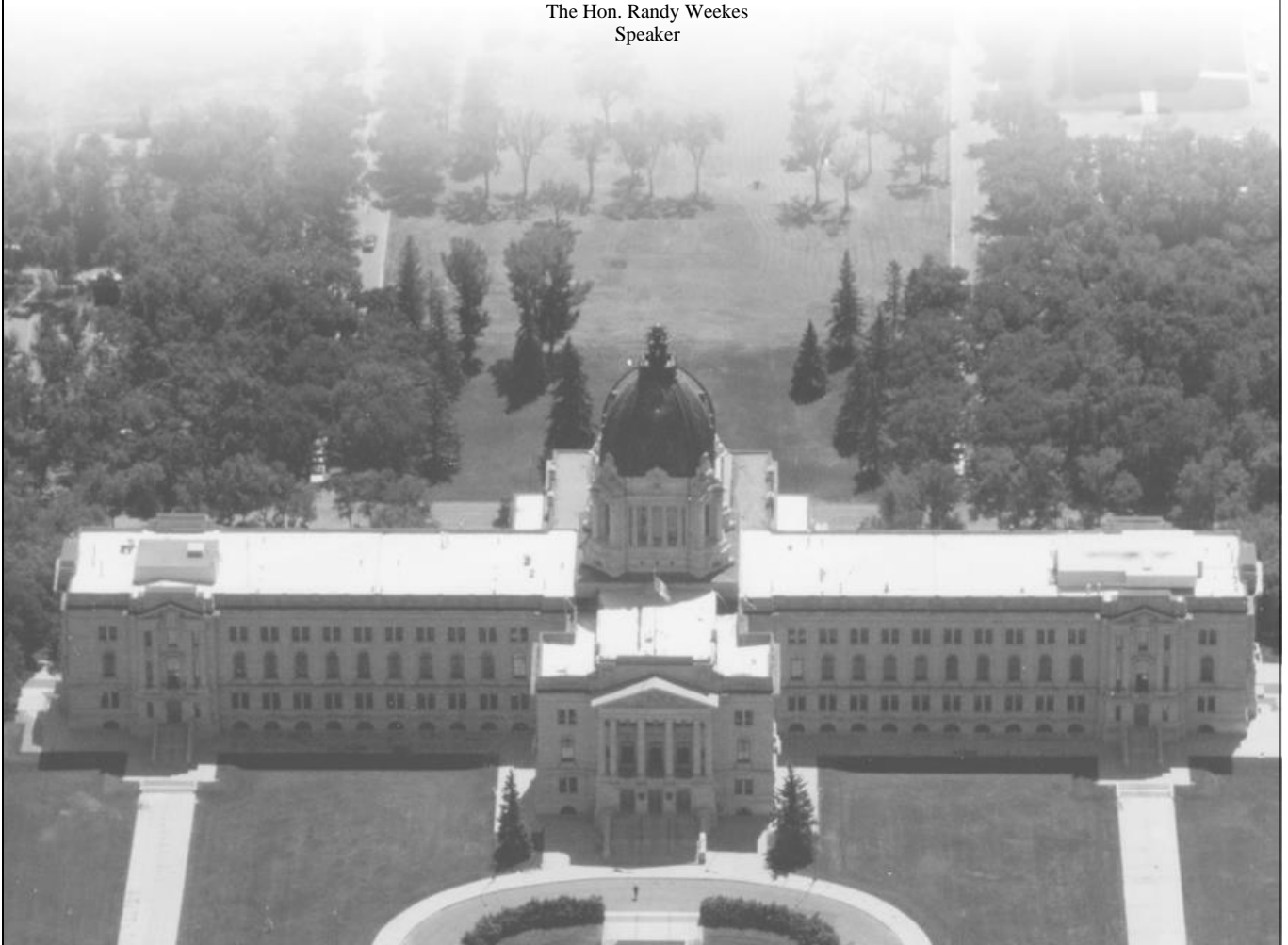
of the

Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

**DEBATES
AND
PROCEEDINGS**

(HANSARD)

Published under the
authority of
The Hon. Randy Weekes
Speaker



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF SASKATCHEWAN
4th Session — 29th Legislature

Lieutenant Governor — His Honour the Honourable Russ Mirasty, S.O.M., M.S.M.

Speaker — Hon. Randy Weekes

Premier — Hon. Scott Moe

Leader of the Opposition — Carla Beck

Beck, Carla — Regina Lakeview (NDP)

Bonk, Steven — Moosomin (SP)

Bowes, Jennifer — Saskatoon University (NDP)

Bradshaw, Fred — Carrot River Valley (SP)

Buckingham, David — Saskatoon Westview (SP)

Burki, Noor — Regina Coronation Park (NDP)

Carr, Hon. Lori — Estevan (SP)

Cheveldayoff, Ken — Saskatoon Willowgrove (SP)

Clarke, Jared — Regina Walsh Acres (NDP)

Cockrill, Hon. Jeremy — The Battlefords (SP)

Conway, Meara — Regina Elphinstone-Centre (NDP)

Dennis, Terry — Canora-Pelly (SP)

Domotor, Ryan — Cut Knife-Turtleford (Ind.)

Duncan, Hon. Dustin — Weyburn-Big Muddy (SP)

Eyre, Hon. Bronwyn — Saskatoon Stonebridge-Dakota (SP)

Fiaz, Muhammad — Regina Pasqua (SP)

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Grewal, Gary — Regina Northeast (SP)

Hargrave, Hon. Joe — Prince Albert Carlton (SP)

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Harrison, Hon. Jeremy — Meadow Lake (SP)

Hindley, Hon. Everett — Swift Current (SP)

Jenson, Terry — Martensville-Warman (SP)

Kaeding, Warren — Melville-Saltcoats (SP)

Keisig, Travis — Last Mountain-Touchwood (SP)

Kirsch, Delbert — Batoche (SP)

Lambert, Lisa — Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood (SP)

Lawrence, Greg — Moose Jaw Wakamow (Ind.)

Lemaigre, Jim — Athabasca (SP)

Love, Matt — Saskatoon Eastview (NDP)

Makowsky, Hon. Gene — Regina Gardiner Park (SP)

Marit, Hon. David — Wood River (SP)

McLeod, Blaine — Lumsden-Morse (SP)

McLeod, Hon. Tim — Moose Jaw North (SP)

McMorris, Hon. Don — Indian Head-Milestone (SP)

Merriman, Hon. Paul — Saskatoon Silverspring-Sutherland (SP)

Moe, Hon. Scott — Rosthern-Shellbrook (SP)

Morgan, Hon. Don — Saskatoon Southeast (SP)

Mowat, Vicki — Saskatoon Fairview (NDP)

Nerlien, Hugh — Kelvington-Wadena (SP)

Nippi-Albright, Betty — Saskatoon Centre (NDP)

Ottenbreit, Greg — Yorkton (SP)

Reiter, Hon. Jim — Rosetown-Elrose (SP)

Ritchie, Erika — Saskatoon Nutana (NDP)

Ross, Alana — Prince Albert Northcote (SP)

Ross, Hon. Laura — Regina Rochdale (SP)

Sarauer, Nicole — Regina Douglas Park (NDP)

Skoropad, Dana — Arm River (SP)

Steele, Doug — Cypress Hills (SP)

Teed, Nathaniel — Saskatoon Meewasin (NDP)

Tell, Hon. Christine — Regina Wascana Plains (SP)

Vermette, Doyle — Cumberland (NDP)

Weekes, Hon. Randy — Biggar-Sask Valley (SP)

Wilson, Nadine — Saskatchewan Rivers (Ind.)

Wotherspoon, Trent — Regina Rosemont (NDP)

Wyant, Hon. Gordon — Saskatoon Northwest (SP)

Young, Aleana — Regina University (NDP)

Young, Colleen — Lloydminster (SP)

Standings

Government Caucus: Saskatchewan Party (SP) — 44; Opposition Caucus: New Democratic Party (NDP) — 14;
Independent: Saskatchewan United Party (Ind.) — 1; Independent — 2

Clerks-at-the-Table

Clerk — Iris Lang

Law Clerk & Parliamentary Counsel — Kenneth S. Ring, K.C.

Deputy Clerk — Kathy Burianyk

Principal Clerk — Robert Park

Sergeant-at-Arms — Lyall Frederiksen

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[The Assembly met at 13:30.]

[Prayers]

The Speaker: — I would just like to welcome everybody here to your Legislative Assembly. I just want to remind you and caution you that you're not to take part in any of the proceedings. That includes clapping or heckling or taking photos, anything like that. So thank you for coming.

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave for an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — Leave has been requested for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Hon. Mr. Cockrill: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, today in the Speaker's gallery we are joined by a group of grade 11 and 12 students who work with Growing Young Movers, or G.Y.M. With us today — and feel free to give us a wave when I say your name, and hopefully the pronunciation, I get that right — we have D'kin Crowe, David Crowe, Samara Nepinak, Terreign Blind, Connor Taypotat, Juelz Jack, River Pelletier, Tyler McNabb, Majestic Houle, Justin Panipekeesick, and the executive director of this program, Brian Lewis.

Mr. Speaker, Growing Young Movers, or G.Y.M., is a not-for-profit with an approach to mentorship that employs high school students from Scott Collegiate to work with children and youth throughout the North Central community right here in Regina. G.Y.M. aims to build upon the strengths that already exist with the young people in our community.

And, Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to sit down with Brian as well as the member from Athabasca and the Minister of Government Relations back in the fall and hear more about this work, and was really inspired to see, really, youth getting work experience, but then also supporting youth who live right in their neighbourhood. Mr. Speaker, we were pleased to be able to provide . . . This government has supported G.Y.M. financially in the past, Mr. Speaker, and we were able to add to that back in March with a \$30,000 additional contribution to G.Y.M.

And, Mr. Speaker, I just want to say again, this work is well served by Brian Lewis who has spent almost 27 years in the K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] and post-secondary spaces in our province. And I'll just say the work that he does to empower youth is fantastic, and he represents I'd say the city of Regina and the province of Saskatchewan quite well, Mr. Speaker.

I would ask all members to join me in welcoming these grade 11 and 12 students and Brian Lewis to this their legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina . . . Oh, are you still on your feet? Go ahead.

Hon. Mr. Cockrill: — Thank you. While I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I'd also recognize in the gallery Bryan Rice, here today from Cornwall Alternative School here in the city of Regina. I've had the opportunity to have some conversation over the last several months during my time as Minister of Education with Bryan and just to understand a little bit more of the important work that's done at Cornwall. And so I'd like to quickly ask all members of the Assembly to join me in welcoming Bryan to his legislature.

Mr. Speaker, I apologize, but while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, probably the most important introduction I'll make of the day today: I'm joined today by my wife and son. He is enjoying the stairs up there in the Speaker's gallery, Mr. Speaker. Apologies for any interruptions to the proceedings later today.

But we're also joined actually by my mom who is joining us from British Columbia today. She's been at the legislature before, Mr. Speaker, but just an amazing woman. The first teacher in my life, Mr. Speaker, and she has this fantastic habit of coming to visit our home in Battleford usually every spring. So she helps do a lot of work in the garden, and really I benefit from the fruits of her labour every spring in our garden at home, Mr. Speaker. So I would ask all members to join me in welcoming my mom, Alyson, to the Saskatchewan legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's a pleasure to join with the minister opposite in welcoming Brian and these students to their Legislative Assembly. Growing Young Movers, can't say enough about this incredible organization that's led by Brian. I can say that I spend a fair bit of time at the māmawēyatitān centre, Mr. Speaker, and there's not really a time that I'm there that I'm not overlapping with something that Growing Young Movers are doing. You know, Brian's running around, engaging these young people, planning the next project.

Case in point, Mr. Speaker. I dropped in just this past weekend. The North Central Community Association had organized their annual spring cleanup of the neighbourhood. They did an incredible job. SaskEnergy volunteers were out; the city of Regina was out. Several local companies had sponsored, and you know, SaskEnergy volunteers were out picking up all that big stuff that's left in alleys. Who do I see but Growing Young Movers?

More youths that day than we see even in the gallery today — and Brian — they patrolled the area on foot, picking up all of the garbage and other things that they came across. Brian was running interference as all the kids were getting dropped off. They were in great spirits, huge smiles ear to ear just obviously so inspired by his leadership but also really fired up to be engaged in their community in this way.

So can't say enough good things about this organization as well as Brian, and I just want to give them a huge shout-out, big love, and a huge welcome to their Legislative Assembly. Thanks for

being with us.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Athabasca.

Mr. Lemaigre: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to join the Minister of Education and the member opposite in welcoming these youth to their legislature. I had the privilege and honour of visiting their school, and one of the visits it was their payday. And I don't know how to say this — the pride that they showed.

And all of us on this floor, at some point somebody had said to us, you're going to be leaders someday. And I want to tell the youth that are here today there's absolutely nothing stopping you from someday to be on this floor. And what you're displaying, it is amazing. I was proud on my second visit to see what you do in action — these younger students are arriving, and the energy and the structure and the set-up. When they talk about leadership, Mr. Speaker, that was on full display that day. And I commend all of you.

You know, sometimes life isn't easy. And we have people like Brian Lewis in our lives that have an impact and set a foundation for us, and all of us have had that in our lives somewhere. And so for the youth, you know, you have a long journey ahead of you. But with what I saw, I am optimistic. I left with hope but I also left with pride that today's leadership is what we see here today. So welcome to your legislature. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — Miigwech, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to join the minister and my colleagues and the member opposite in welcoming the students from Scott Collegiate and also Brian.

And in particular, I just want to say to the young folks that are here from Scott Collegiate, first of all, when I was in grade 10 I went to Scott Collegiate — the old building, not this new fancy building you guys are all in — but I was there and I took industrial arts when I was young, your age.

And I also just want to concur with the member opposite who said, you know what, you have an opportunity to also sit here with us. You know, as Indigenous youth you face challenges, huge challenges. But you know what? If you ever aspire to be sitting in this legislature or any legislature across this country, know that it is possible. Like the member opposite said, hard work, perseverance, do well in school in spite of the social issues that we see in our communities, and you have a place here. Just know that me, as a Saulteaux Cree woman, know I'm just so pleased to have here.

[The hon. member spoke for a time in Saulteaux.]

I just want to say how grateful I am that you are here to join us today. Gichi-miigwech, and we welcome you to your legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just to give you a heads-up, I'm going to have a couple of

introductions, just so that we got that clear. I first would like to introduce Brad Crassweller, and seated beside him is Nicole Entner-McCullough. And I'm going to have a lot more to say about Nicole — she's my constituency assistant — in my speech later on this afternoon, if I can get through that. So I'll have more to say about that.

But Brad Crassweller is the owner-operator of Cedar Creek Gardens just south of Regina. Married with four children, Mr. Speaker, he's a councillor for the RM [rural municipality] of Sherwood. But more importantly, he won a three-way battle to be the Sask Party representative for White City-Qu'appelle in the next general election, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I think he'll represent that constituency very well.

We had a great night that night. It took a long time to count the ballots, and I was supposed to be the guest speaker, and I couldn't carry it until they got all the ballots counted. But the nice part was White City-Qu'appelle is 80 per cent Indian Head-Milestone and 20 per cent Regina Wascana Plains. And the member from Wascana Plains was there, and she took the other 20 per cent until we got to the vote count, and finally found a winner. So I'd like everybody to welcome Brad to the seat up there for now, but more importantly to a seat down here after the next general election.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And really quickly, I won't be too long. But I want to also, as many members have already recognized, to me he's Mr. Lewis. Mr. Lewis was a teacher at St. Dominic elementary school and taught both of our sons, Craig and Mark. He is a huge role model now, and he was huge role model then. Mark had asked Mr. Lewis if he would be the sponsor when Mark was confirmed. So he has been a real model for both our boys, and he's continuing on that trait. Thank you for all you do.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to join with members on both sides of the Assembly in recognizing all of these leaders in education who have joined us here today. It's a rare day in this Assembly when we have leaders in all three galleries here, folks — leaders at young ages, leaders in their careers, educators and principals. And it's so wonderful.

I want to thank all of you from Cornwall School, from Scott Collegiate, some students from Saskatoon who will be introduced here shortly, I believe, and probably more that I'm forgetting. It's such a great day in this Assembly when we're joined by so many of these leaders in our province.

But I want to recognize a couple here, Mr. Speaker, who've joined us from Saskatoon. I want to welcome Solongo and Argho to their Assembly. Solongo and Argho are students at Centennial Collegiate in Saskatoon, and they've engaged in something that's really quite inspiring. They've set out to support their teachers by collecting signatures on a petition known as the Crayon Crusade.

I'll be saying more about that in an upcoming member's statement but I want to mention here how inspiring it is to have these young people want to show the power and the value of youth voice advocating for better supports, for smaller class sizes, for solutions to classroom complexity, and becoming

active in doing that. They've collected over 1,100 signatures, Mr. Speaker, and it's truly inspiring. I've always been a big believer in youth voice and the power of students.

And I want to thank them for the work that they've done. I want to thank their families who are here today from Saskatoon and from Bangladesh, who are here to support these young leaders. And I want to welcome them and ask all members of the Assembly to join me in welcoming them to their Legislative Assembly today.

[13:45]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Kelvington-Wadena.

Mr. Nerlien: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request leave for a brief but extended invitation.

The Speaker: — The member asked for leave for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Mr. Nerlien: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's my honour to introduce my good friend, Lou Coderre, sitting on the floor today, a business and community leader from Wynyard. Lou is accompanied by his caregiver, Mykola Dolhov, a recent arrival from Ukraine, who is very interested in our democratic process. Mykola is married and has five children and is doing extremely well in Wynyard, I understand.

Mr. Speaker, Lou was a teacher, a principal, school psychologist in various parts of Saskatchewan, but he is also currently the president of Wynyard Technologies. Lou is extremely busy in many, many business ventures. He was the founder of Big Quill Resources which has now encompassed minerals, and he's doing lot of work with a number of ag industry folks as well. So he's a very, very busy man, and I'm very proud of all he does.

Of note, also in 2008 Lou led a local community group, along with the town of Wynyard and the Ministry of Social Services, to develop a group home for persons with intellectual disabilities in Wynyard. He currently is Chair of Wynyard CARRES [community access — respite, rehabilitation, education services] and this marvellous facility continues to serve the community needs, and I know Lou is very proud of the team there.

More recently Mr. Coderre opened a unique business called Common Grounds Coffee House, and the Premier was there I think last year. It's a wonderful business in the community, and it serves as a community meeting place and welcoming guest speakers, musicians, and artists to share their talents and improve the lives of Wynyard residents.

Mr. Speaker, Lou ran against me in the 2014 nomination, and I was fortunate enough to squeak out a win in that event. Not long after he suffered a very, very serious snowmobile accident, and continues though in true inspirational fashion. He continues to lead the Wynyard business and philanthropic community, as well as serving on my constituency association and being a good

friend and mentor.

Colleagues, please join me in welcoming Lou to his legislature and Mykola to the Saskatchewan legislature. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Request leave for extended introduction.

The Speaker: — Leave has been requested for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. First I'll start in joining with the member from Kelvington to welcome Lou Coderre to his Assembly here today. It's an honour to have you on the floor of the Assembly. Lou is known to many as an incredible community leader, local business person that's been incredibly successful and has made a tremendous difference in the lives of many children and many communities through his work as an educator, as a teacher, a principal, administrator, and psychologist. And you know, we have some mutual friends. I know my dad counts Lou as a friend as well, and someone he respects. And I want to welcome him to this Assembly.

Something unique about Lou as well is that he's stepped up to be active politically over the years to effect positive change democratically, seeing that as a vehicle. And he stepped up to run with the NDP [New Democratic Party] back up in Cumberland in 1981. I think he was up in Flin Flon-Creighton area. And then he stepped up with the Liberals a couple times under Haverstock as well as Karwacki. And then of course as the member just identified, he stepped up on a nomination with the Sask Party. Setting all of that aside, Lou throughout his life has worked to improve his province and make his community a better place for everyone. And for that, on behalf of the official opposition, I want to say thank you so very much.

While on my feet, Mr. Speaker, seated behind me on the floor of the Assembly in the tie and the blue jacket, looking sharp there, Mr. Speaker, is Grant Whitmore, who served as an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] for Biggar in 1991 to '95 and then in Saskatoon Northwest from '95 to '99. He grew up on a farm just outside of Harris, Saskatchewan. He studied ag economics at the University of Saskatchewan. He continues to work as an ag consultant all across Saskatchewan. He stopped in here today. I think he started his morning with a producer down in Pangman, and he's headed to go meet with producers in around Watrous here today. And I had the pleasure of sitting down with Grant here today as well.

Again, this is somebody who's worked to improve his province, to build a better a future, who's served honourably as an MLA and continues to serve the wonderful agriculture sector and the producers who make it all happen. So I ask all members of this Assembly to welcome Grant Whitmore to his Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, while on my feet — I might not sit down, you know — I saw Reverend Marc Jerry here, the president of Luther

College and high school. I suspect he'll be getting a more formal introduction in a few minutes, but this is a tremendous leader and an incredible person. And certainly Luther College and high school is an incredibly important educational institution, respect of the university as well as the high school, to this province.

I've gotten to know this leader, this person, and I'm thankful for his service, his leadership in education, as well as his service through faith and to many through the community and across the province. So I ask all members to welcome Reverend Marc Jerry, the president of Luther College and Luther High School to his Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure again today to introduce my daughter Shannon Harpauer, and my two grandchildren Emryk and Makenna. It's a pleasure to have them, as well as my daughter Lindsay and baby Joy, who's sporting a bow I think almost as big as her head today. She's two months now. She was eight days on budget day.

Mr. Speaker, with them are friends of my daughter's, Lindsay's, but they're such good friends they've become very, very important friends to my entire family. And that is Joeline Grudnitzki and Taylor Cobbe. They are a great part of our family and I can't say enough good things about these two women. They are just so precious.

As well in your west gallery, Mr. Speaker, I have someone that has been with me since I was first elected in 1999, and that is my constituency assist, Susan Dunne. Susan Dunne had worked for the government in Yellowknife and then came back to Saskatchewan, and she started working for me when I was first elected and she's been there ever since. She is indeed the face to the constituency, and even when people are mad at me, they can never be mad at Susan. She is just that person that is wonderful to everybody and loved by everyone.

So I would like all members to join me in welcoming these people to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina University.

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. It's my pleasure to rise today and welcome a group of 21 grade 5 students from Marion McVeety to their legislature, who are enthusiastically waving.

Marion McVeety's a school I've been very proud to represent, first as a school board trustee, now as an MLA — just an absolutely wonderful elementary school. You guys have one of the best playgrounds in Hillsdale. You have some of the best teachers and best principals as well as everybody who works in your community, and the barbecues that you do with your SCC [school community council] are just such a treat. I can't wait to meet with you after question period today. I look forward to your very hard-hitting questions. Yeah, I'm seeing some heads nod. I want them to be good. You're my last school group so I really want to go out with a bang. Seeing some enthusiastic thumbs-up. With that, Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members to join me in welcoming these grade 5 students and their teacher, Mr. Brad

Sinclair, to this, their legislature.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Advanced Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, if I could ask for leave for an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — Leave has been requested for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Well, Mr. Speaker, having been pre-empted by the member from Regina Rosemont — and thank you for that; it was good — I'd like to welcome a very special guest to the Legislative Assembly today, Mr. Speaker, and to say farewell. Seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, is Dr. Marc Jerry who joins us for the last time before he embarks on a new opportunity. Also seated with Dr. Jerry is one of our outstanding ministry officials, Mr. Speaker, Mike Pestill.

Dr. Jerry has served as the president of Luther College High School and the university campus since July of 2020. He joined the college during a very, very challenging time — I think we can all attest to that — as the sector was grappling with the impacts of COVID-19. His leadership during that time and afterwards ensured the health and safety of students and employees while Luther continued to provide high-quality education.

I've had the opportunity to work with Dr. Jerry over the last two years during my time as the Minister of Advanced Education, and I can tell you he's always willing to step up and take on other leadership roles to support the goals of Saskatchewan's post-secondary sector.

So just a few examples, Mr. Speaker. During the pandemic, Dr. Jerry represented Saskatchewan's federated and affiliated colleges at our large-sector leadership table, and when asked by the ministry to support the international education program, he welcomed the opportunity to utilize Luther College's international baccalaureate diploma program. He also hasn't hesitated to become a member of SHEQAB, the Saskatchewan Higher Education Quality Assurance Board. His professionalism and his candour, his respectful approach, transparency, responsiveness, and passion for higher education have contributed to an excellent relationship with the Ministry of Advanced Education.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I started at the beginning by saying that there's a new journey. Dr. Jerry has been appointed as the next president and vice-chancellor at Renison University College at the University of Waterloo. Their gain, Mr. Speaker, is certainly our loss. He and his family will be moving to Ontario this spring. However there's some good news in this, Mr. Speaker. I understand that Dr. Jerry's daughter Carmen will enjoy Saskatchewan and is going to be staying here to finish her undergraduate degree.

But we know Dr. Jerry will miss Saskatchewan, and we in the

ministry and in Saskatchewan and at the university will certainly miss him. So please join me in welcoming Dr. Marc Jerry to his legislature, applauding him for his outstanding leadership and contributions to Saskatchewan's post-secondary sector, and wishing him all the best in his new endeavours.

Mr. Speaker, while I'm on my feet I just want to briefly introduce a number of members in the west gallery. My CA [constituency assistant] is here. Sara Briggs is here. She's been my CA for 10 years, Mr. Speaker. And we all know that we can't run an effective office without having a very, very good CA, and she's been with me for those 10 years. She said to me this morning that I had to put up with her. Well, Mr. Speaker, it's exactly the opposite. She's had to put up with me and one or two idiosyncrasies I think we share. So I wanted to welcome Sara to her Legislative Assembly.

And, Mr. Speaker, I just, just briefly, Mr. Speaker, want to acknowledge two of my former chiefs of staff that are in the west gallery. Amanda Plummer and Michelle Lang are here with us. I know they've taken time out of their busy work schedule to be with us. And I see Karalee McLeod there who could have been my chief of staff. She worked very, very closely with Michelle in making sure that our office ran as efficiently and effectively as it could. And I want to thank them both for being here today, and we all miss you in the building. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon University.

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd just like to join with the minister opposite as well as the member on our side here who's welcomed Dr. Marc Jerry. As the critic for Advanced Education also want to say how much your work has been appreciated in the sector. It's been great to watch your leadership at Luther College and really want to wish you all the best in your new role at the University of Waterloo. And thank you so much for joining us here.

Oh, and while I'm on my feet, Mr. Speaker, I can't forget to introduce a group of wonderful grade 8 students from Greystone Heights in Saskatoon, 41 grade 8 students who've joined us here today accompanied by their teacher, Sara Stone, as well as Christine Loewen, Cory Farthing, Taylor Brown, and Owen Gustafson.

As the member from Regina University has indicated with her group of students, I am also . . . This will be my last time being able to entertain questions and hard-hitting feedback from students here in the legislature, so I'm really looking forward to engaging with you, having a picture, and answering your questions after question period. And as the member for Regina University has said, no questions are off limits. So think of your tough ones now and look forward to meeting you out there afterwards. Thank you.

[14:00]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Last Mountain-Touchwood.

Mr. Keisig: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To you and through you, it is my distinct pleasure to introduce in the west gallery,

Tyler Lawrason. Give a wave, Tyler. Thank you. He's the chief administrative officer of the municipal district of Provost No. 52. He is also the past president of the Alberta Rural Municipal Administrators' Association. He's in town for the RMAA, the Rural Municipal Administrators' Association convention going on currently in Regina right now, Mr. Speaker. They're a fraternal organization, so Alberta always sends a representative to Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan always sends a representative to Alberta's, yeah.

Anyway Tyler is absolutely no stranger to the political scene, Mr. Speaker. Years ago he worked as a chief of staff in the former premier of Alberta's Legislative Assembly, Ralph Klein. So please join me in welcoming Tyler Lawrason to this, the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Ms. Beck: — Request leave for an extended introduction.

The Speaker: — Leave has been requested for an extended introduction. Is leave granted?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Ms. Beck: — Just to be safe I'll try to be brief, Mr. Speaker. Thank you. There's a bit of a theme here today with all of our guests. I just want to say welcome to all of the guests here — all of the youth, the students, and all of those who inspire them. This has been such a positive and hopeful round of introductions so far.

I want to say a special thank you and farewell, but don't be a stranger, to Dr. Marc Jerry with Luther College and Luther High School, someone who has shown exceptional leadership, someone we will dearly miss, and who is going to go on, and as the minister said, our loss is definitely Waterloo's gain. But I know you'll come back and visit because we have captured the heart of your daughter and she's remaining here.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say a welcome to Grant Whitmore. Young at heart is also an important characteristic, Mr. Speaker, someone who shows such enthusiasm not only for his public service but for our ag industry here in Saskatchewan, and there's a lot to take inspiration from there.

I really have enjoyed listening to the members who are not returning introduce their family and where they draw inspiration from. Not all of the comments, but certainly that part, Mr. Speaker.

Speaking of where I draw my inspiration, someone I've introduced before — and I will be brief here — my mom, Judy, has joined us. We don't have the member for Carrot River Valley on our side, so my mom comes in and brings us cookies at the end of session, something that I think the team very much looks forward to.

But she's brought a friend with her here today, Mr. Speaker, Tanja Ignatiuk. Someone who she met, they became friends while working at the Sask Abilities Council. Very accomplished

in her own right. A volunteer active with the German Club, proud mom, and I believe she's here for her first viewing of the Legislative Assembly. So everyone will, I'm sure, be on their best behaviour, Mr. Speaker.

I want to say to all of these guests, welcome. Thank you for inspiring us and for inspiring youth in our province. And I invite all members to join me in welcoming these guests to their Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Mr. Speaker, I would just briefly join with the Leader of the Opposition in welcoming not only Tanja, but welcoming her mother, Judy, to the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Speaker. I think I've had the opportunity to welcome Judy and Ray here once previously.

But I would just again remind everyone in this Assembly here today that no one on the floor of this Assembly, wherever you sit, you don't serve alone. You only serve here with the support and love of your family, Mr. Speaker, and it's true wherever you may sit.

And I want to not only welcome Judy to the Legislative Assembly but thank her and her family for her support of a very important, and I would say, impactful member — some days, I think too impactful, Mr. Speaker — a member, her daughter that sits on the floor of this Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments Corporation.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's an honour to introduce somebody that's joining us in the west gallery, Jim Bobst. Jim — and I'll probably get the dates wrong — but about 10 years ago or so, Jim ended a very successful career in the credit union system to go into the ministry. And he's been a pastor on the staff of the Regina Apostolic Church since then, Mr. Speaker. I'm not only proud to say that he's my pastor but he's also my good friend. And I want to ask everyone to welcome Jim to his Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Riversdale.

Mr. Friesen: — To you and through you, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to expand on the Minister of Advanced Education's introduction to, first of all, Michelle Lang. My run in the 2020 election, Mr. Speaker, Michelle was in the war room. And I would literally get home at dark and start sending off emails with questions and I would have them all back that same night. So it's great to see you back here, Michelle. We miss you in the building.

And beside her, Karalee McLeod, and glad her name has changed to McLeod. I couldn't really pronounce the last one. I had the pleasure to be at her wedding and she was really the first person that, when I came into the building, I was just told if you don't know what to do, go see Karalee. So it's great to see you back today and welcome to your Legislative Assembly.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Government

Relations.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thanks, Mr. Speaker. I'll try and be real brief. Normally there aren't this many introductions to all of you in the gallery; we usually get through this quite a bit quicker. But I saw Bill and Jocelyn Hutchinson come into the gallery, seated in your gallery, Mr. Speaker, and I just wanted to introduce them.

Bill had a great career as a city councillor, Mr. Speaker. I had the opportunity of going door knocking with him a few times because he went from city council then he ran for us and was elected in 2007. And I remember one door I knocked at for Bill, and the person came out and I said, "I'm campaigning for Bill Hutchinson." He said, "Well wasn't he a councillor? He came and shovelled my driveway once."

That's the service that Bill Hutchinson gave to his, first of all, his municipal political career, but also was a great cabinet minister in our government as Government Relations, I believe at one point, and a few other ministerial roles. Thank you for your service, Bill, and thank you Jocelyn for supporting him. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Very briefly in the west gallery because I'll have more to say about them later, is some very special people in my life — my family. I'll have them have a little bit of a wave as I introduce them. First and foremost is my mom, Pat; my wife, Leone; my eldest daughter, Katelin, and her daughter Malaya. Mark is out parking the truck and trailer. My younger daughter Rayanne; her husband, Austin; and grandchildren Wynnslet, Otto, and Crew. And my sister-in-law Teri Wiwchar and my cousin, Leone's cousin — our Ronald McDonald House when we were going through a difficult time with our son in Saskatoon — Kelly Harris. I ask all members to welcome them to their Legislative Assembly.

I forgot one, Mr. Speaker. I am sorry. Another very special person. More than a CA, more than a friend, she's like a sister to me. Lauretta Ritchie-McInnes served with Bob Bjornerud in Melville-Saltcoats for 12 years, has served with me for over 17, counting nominations and all the rest probably 19. So I want everyone to welcome Lauretta to her Legislative Assembly as well.

PRESENTING PETITIONS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Centre.

Ms. Nippi-Albright: — Miigwech, Mr. Speaker. It's an honour to present the following petition. The folks who signed this petition wish to bring to your attention the following: Saskatchewan needs legislation to ensure the provincial duty-to-consult is fulfilled and carried out with the honour of the Crown; the current duty-to-consult policy isn't effective; the Sask Party government continues to move forward in duty-to-consult processes without fulfilling constitutional obligations set through many court cases that have shaped how the duty-to-consult should be observed in present day, including multiple Supreme Court rulings; and the Sask Party has never addressed cumulative

impacts, yet duty-to-consult must consider cumulative effects on the ability to practise inherent and treaty rights before approving projects in Saskatchewan.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to enshrine duty-to-consult into law by enacting the meaningful duty-to-consult legislation.

The folks who signed this petition reside in Yellow Quill First Nation and Fosston. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Fairview.

Ms. Mowat: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise to present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan to fix the crisis in health care. With frequent closures to emergency rooms, X-ray services, and no ambulance available in times of need, people are ready for change. We have the longest wait times for knee and hip surgeries in Canada, and 200,000 people in this province don't have access to a family doctor or a nurse practitioner. Women are having to travel out of province for basic breast cancer screenings, and kids and families for pediatric care.

And yesterday SUN [Saskatchewan Union of Nurses] reported another crisis in the RUH [Royal University Hospital] emergency room with 40 people waiting for a bed, no movement through the hospital, and 21 people in the hallway. Enough is enough.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately address the short-staffing crisis in health care and work with health care workers on solutions to improve patient care.

This is signed today by individuals from Regina, Mr. Speaker. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Rosemont.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise on my feet here once again today to present petitions, as I have over the last few years, to fix Highway 9 between Preeceville and Hudson Bay.

Over the last number of years, of course, we've been petitioning hard. The communities have been speaking out, Mr. Speaker, about the completely unacceptable state of Highway 9 between Preeceville and Hudson Bay. Of course this is a vital artery for those communities and residents and the industries, Mr. Speaker, an incredible and beautiful part of our province. And the roads simply aren't safe, Mr. Speaker, when we look at Highway 9.

Now we've presented hundreds of petitions, Mr. Speaker, and I've got hundreds and hundreds more signatures here to present

because this government just hasn't acted on Highway 9, Mr. Speaker.

The prayer reads as follows:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately address the inadequate condition of Highway 9 by working with and listening to the concerns of municipalities, residents, and industry.

These petitions today are signed by concerned residents from Preeceville, Stenen, Hudson Bay, Norquay, Prairie River, Weekes, Kamsack, Prince Albert, and Regina. I so submit.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my honour to rise again and present a petition to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan calling for adequate funding for education.

Mr. Speaker, for the last 10 years we have seen a decline in per-student funding. This province used to lead the nation, and we are now in dead last. Mr. Speaker, I saw the impacts of this when I was a classroom teacher over my time in the classroom in Saskatoon public schools. And I fear that since that time, over the last four years, the situation has only gotten worse.

Mr. Speaker, I stand here confidently today to say that if this Sask Party government is unwilling or unable to solve the problems that our classrooms face, this side, the Saskatchewan NDP and this leader, are ready to deliver for our students and our classrooms.

I'll read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to provide adequate, sustainable, and predictable operating funds for our 27 public and separate school divisions to ensure that schools, teachers, and other caring professionals are able to meet the needs of every student in Saskatchewan.

I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Meewasin.

Mr. Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I'm on my feet today to present our petition to the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan calling on the government to scrap Bill 137. The undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to our attention that Bill 137 is an egregious attack on the queer and trans community as it directs educators to non-consensually out two-spirit, trans, and nonbinary students under the age of 16; queer and trans youth are at higher risk of homelessness, self harm, and suicide when their identities are not affirmed in safe and inclusive environments; and that this policy was developed without consultation from educators, parents, students, or subject matter experts.

[14:15]

Mr. Speaker, I will read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately reverse the Ministry of Education's use of preferred first name and pronouns by students' policy and Bill 137 and instruct the Ministry of Education to publicly consult with educators, parents, students, and subject matter experts to develop and implement 2SLGBTQIA+ affirming policies at all levels of government in our education system.

Mr. Speaker, the hundreds of signatories that I present today reside in communities across our great province including Prince Albert, Saskatoon, Regina, Yorkton, Weyburn, White Fox, and Davidson. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina University.

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We've seen it today. We all serve here with the love of our families, but unfortunately for many, making a family can be heartbreaking. Here in Saskatchewan we're one of only two provinces with no support for people struggling to conceive, struggling with access to fertility care. And this is a steep and devastating impact both emotionally and economically. There's a particular impact on queer and trans communities, Mr. Speaker. And science should move us forward in helping people create families here in Saskatchewan.

And here in Saskatchewan, our fertility rate is well below the rate of replacement. So having more babies born here in Saskatchewan to families who want them and love them will only help build a strong and growing province and a strong and growing economy. Mr. Speaker, people's ability to conceive should not be based on their ability to pay. I want to thank everybody who has written in, signed these petitions, called, talked about their journeys and their heartaches.

The signatories of these petitions today, Mr. Speaker, are from Dalmeny, Estevan, Grandora, Invermay, Lumsden, McLean, Milestone, Montmartre, Moose Jaw, Pilot Butte, Prince Albert, Raymore, Regina, Saskatoon, Sedley, Unity, Warman, Weyburn, White City, and Wolseley.

And I will read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request that the Government of Saskatchewan immediately move to cover the financial burden of two rounds of IVF treatment for Saskatchewan people experiencing infertility.

I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Walsh Acres.

Mr. Clarke: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling on the Legislative Assembly to immediately address the doctor shortage in Duck Lake.

The undersigned residents of the province of Saskatchewan wish to bring to our attention the following: that nearly 1,000 people in the Duck Lake and surrounding area are without a doctor, and that's in addition to the 1,000 people on Beardy's First Nation who are also without a doctor. The shortage of doctors is impacting local clinics and long-term care homes, with some unable to provide the level of care that they have historically been able to provide.

We've had folks from this community here in the Legislative Assembly as recently as last week. They are hoping that this government finds a solution to these doctor shortages very soon because the community is hurting without these doctors.

I'll read the prayer, Mr. Speaker:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to immediately recruit and retain doctors to provide adequate and accessible health care to Rosthern, Duck Lake, and the surrounding area.

Today the signatories of this petition reside in Rosthern, Duck Lake, Hague, Waldheim, and Osler. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Douglas Park.

Ms. Sarauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to present a petition calling on the government to improve labour laws in Saskatchewan.

Those who've signed this petition wish to bring to our attention the following: that even after the October 1st increase to minimum wage, Saskatchewan still has the lowest minimum wage in Canada at \$14 an hour. Mr. Speaker, in addition, the opposition has twice introduced paid sick leave legislation, and it's well known now that paid sick leave has been proven to save employers money while making workplaces healthier and safer for all workers.

Mr. Speaker, it's a sad stat to read out, but 71 per cent of workers in Canada have experienced workplace violence and/or harassment, and much more needs to be done to ensure that workplaces are violence- and harassment-free.

I'd like to read the prayer:

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan call on the Government of Saskatchewan to improve conditions for Saskatchewan workers by passing legislation to increase the minimum wage, guarantee paid sick leave, limit non-disclosure agreements which could silence survivors of workplace harassment, and require employers to track and report incidents of violence and harassment in the workplace.

All very reasonable positions, Mr. Speaker, that we do hope the government takes on and passes into legislation. I have many, many pages of this petition to introduce today. I'll read some of the people's residences. They include places like Weyburn, Cupar, Regina, Martensville, Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker. I do

present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm on my feet to again present a petition calling on the Sask Party government to open up the vacant Sask Housing units. There are thousands of them sitting vacant across the province, Mr. Speaker.

And in late 2023 the official opposition worked to measure what those vacancies mean. They mean 600 million of stranded assets, units just sitting idle and empty. They mean 200 million going out — paying taxes, heat, utilities on these empty units, Mr. Speaker — all as a result of this Sask Party government's 40 per cent reduction in maintenance and renovation, hundreds of millions cut to Sask Housing, Mr. Speaker.

Saskatchewan people have signed this petition because they believe that Saskatchewan people deserve safe and decent housing. But the Sask Party government says there's no money for these mouldy, boarded-up, sometimes exploding Sask Housing units. It's unacceptable, Mr. Speaker.

The signatories of this petition are calling on this government, particularly at a time when we see rising homelessness across the province, to open up these vacant units for 2024, to renovate them and make them ready for use, and to provide available and affordable housing for Saskatchewan people.

Hundreds of signatures in this stack of petitions here, Mr. Speaker, signed by residents right across this beautiful province. I do so present.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon University.

Ms. Bowes: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise for the final time of my time in the House here to present our petition calling on the Government of Saskatchewan to implement pay equity legislation.

The undersigned hundreds of residents from across the province would like to bring to our attention the following: that Saskatchewan is one of only four provinces that does not have pay equity legislation; Saskatchewan also has one of the highest gender wage gaps in Canada, which is the result of systemic gender discrimination in compensation for work that must be corrected by pay equity legislation; and the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission, over 25 years ago, Mr. Speaker, has recommended proactive and comprehensive pay equity legislation which to date has not been pursued by the Government of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to say that this petition, which we've been presenting over the years here in this Chamber, has received widespread support, including this stack of hundreds of petitions, which represents folks, residents from across 52 — at least 52 — different locations in Saskatchewan. That includes Watrous, La Loche, Buffalo Narrows, Saskatoon, Regina, Holdfast, Swift Current, La Ronge, Carrot River, St. Brieux, Kelvington, Moose Jaw, Caronport, Weyburn, Ebenezer, Nipawin, Tisdale, Melfort, Pleasantdale, Tantallon, Pennant, Preeceville, Meadow Lake,

Martensville, Warman, Rosthern, Rose Valley, Kinistino, Crooked River, Prince Albert, Ile-a-la-Crosse, Melville, Quill Lake, Lintlaw, Porcupine Plain, Tuxford, Canora, Davin, Star City, Marcelin, Churchbridge, Balgonie, Lumsden, Canwood, Marcelin, Ituna, North Battleford, White City, Craven, Alameda, Weldon, and Pilot Butte. I do so present, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Nutana.

Ms. Ritchie: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise yet again to present a petition to the Government of Saskatchewan to protect Saskatchewan's water supply. I have been criss-crossing the province this past year as I have been undertaking my private members' bill to protect water. And while I've done that, I've heard from communities concerned about the state of our water supply particularly this year as we head into a drought situation, communities such as Swift Current, Cumberland House, and others very concerned about the state of our water.

As we know, water is essential for human health, recreation, the health of our ecosystems, and our economy. Research from the University of Regina shows the quality of water in Saskatchewan's lakes is getting worse. The Provincial Auditor has pointed out that Saskatchewan's lack of a wetland policy negatively affects water quality and significant work remains to better regulate drainage. And the government needs to take an active role in opposing policies that have downstream impacts on Saskatchewan's rivers and deltas and communities.

We, in the prayer that reads as follows, respectfully request the Legislative Assembly to actively protect Saskatchewan waters from current and future threats to our valuable water supply.

I am presenting petitions with signatures of over 350 people, citizens of this province, communities from straight across including Balcarres, Willow Bunch, Fort Qu'Appelle, Wynyard, Lebre, Belle Plaine, Pasqua Lake, Regina, Lipton, Yorkton, White City, Saskatoon, Katapwa First Nation, Leross, Avonlea, Milestone, Martensville, Southey, Francis, Lanigan, Punichy, Lumsden, Avonlea, Standing Buffalo, Abernethy, Okanese First Nation, Lemberg, Fleming, Archerwill, Shaunavon, Furdale, Cumberland, and Bellevue. I do so present.

STATEMENTS BY MEMBERS

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Prince Albert Northcote.

Prince Albert Vocalist Wins Top Prize on *Canada's Got Talent*

Ms. A. Ross: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Prince Albert and northern Saskatchewan have a rising star to be proud of. Last night, Rebecca Strong was announced as this year's winner of *Canada's Got Talent*. With an absolutely epic rendition of Adele's song "Rolling in the Deep," she secured the \$1 million prize and the hearts of Canadians across the country.

We introduced Rebecca to the House last week after she won the golden buzzer in the semifinals of the popular talent show. We were also fortunate to have her and her father give the caucus

office a private performance of “Hallelujah,” and we knew right there that there was no way Rebecca was leaving *Canada’s Got Talent* without that million-dollar award.

Mr. Speaker, this province is incredibly proud of Rebecca. Not only has she shown how incredible her talent is, but she has also been a continuously positive voice for Indigenous youth. Rebecca is a living example of how following your dreams and listening to your heart will take you exactly where you need to go.

Once more on behalf of the Legislative Assembly, congratulations to Rebecca Strong on her victory, and we wish her all the best in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Students Organize Saskatoon Crayon Crusade in Support of Education

Mr. Love: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise to highlight two highly engaged and inspirational students from Centennial Collegiate in Saskatoon. They created the Saskatoon Crayon Crusade, organized by Argho and Solongo, and they did this to show support from students for their teachers.

They developed a petition with the help of school volunteers, distributed it among their peers, and after six weeks that petition made its way to St. Frances Cree Bilingual School, Bedford Road Collegiate, Walter Murray, Bethlehem, Marion Graham, Holy Cross, Evan Hardy, Bishop James Mahoney, Nutana Collegiate, E.D. Feehan, and Warman High School. Together they collected 1,131 signatures, most of which are signed in crayon to represent the power of youth.

The petition states that students currently attending Saskatoon high schools are not receiving the quality education they deserve. And the request of students in the petition is clear: that the Government of Saskatchewan come to the table with teachers and rectify the issues raised in bargaining regarding classroom support, including class size, complexity, and funding. The signatures are of future voters and those who will use their voice to make change.

Mr. Speaker, these students are here today supported by their families, and they will be in the rotunda after question period to hand-present the petition to the Minister of Education. I hope he will join them there. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Willowgrove.

Early Years Family Resource Centre Opens in Saskatoon

Mr. Cheveldayoff: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It was my great pleasure to take part in the official opening of the Early Years Family Resource Centre in the Saskatoon Willowgrove constituency in the community of Brighton. I was honoured to bring greetings on behalf of the Premier and the Minister of Education. I was joined by local Saskatoon city councillor Sarina Gersher; DeeAnn Mercier, the CEO [chief executive officer] of the YMCA in Saskatoon; and former MLA Rob Norris. I was

thrilled to be amongst the families and staff of this Early Years Family Resource Centre who have worked so hard to make this opening a reality.

Ten years ago our government oversaw the initial pilot of Early Years Family Resource Centres in Regina, Yorkton, and Sandy Bay. We have come so far in 10 years, Mr. Speaker. Saskatchewan families with young children now have access to 21 centres in 19 communities throughout the province.

We also continue to see the incredible work being done with families at the Saskatoon Early Years Family Resource Centre west. We are committed to supporting parents during their children’s crucial early years in development and growth. From March 18th to March 31st this year, this new location has already welcomed over 200 adults and children.

[14:30]

Many more families will visit this centre and receive the supports they need. The work done at the Early Years Family Resource Centre are making an immeasurable impact on families in our great province, for which I am truly grateful for. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Meewasin.

Rainbow Week of Action

Mr. Teed: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. May 11th to 17th has been declared rainbow equality week across Canada, a national week of action to address anti-2SLGBTQIA+ [two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and/or questioning, intersex, asexual plus] government policy and rising hate. This week of action will culminate on May 17th, International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia.

Sadly under this Saskatchewan Party government, homophobia and transphobia are alive and well in our province. Through use of the notwithstanding clause the Sask Party government has wilfully rolled back the human rights of queer and trans children in our province and has amplified hate. This has left Saskatchewan in violation of the very human rights code this government updated in 2017, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the UN [United Nations] Rights of the Child. Worse yet, the Minister of Justice has said she would wilfully use the notwithstanding clause again and will be spending untold amounts of tax dollars on court challenges against queer and trans youth.

Mr. Speaker, the community has seen and responded. City by city, every Pride organization in the province is banning Sask Party members from attending Pride celebrations. I hope other Pride organizations will do the same. Our community will not forgive this egregious attack.

In 2024 the people will have a chance to elect a government that respects human rights and that affirms the lives of queer and trans people in Saskatchewan instead of a government that betrays them to keep far-right voters in the tent. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood.

**Portable Pediatric MRI Machine
Introduced at the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital**

Ms. Lambert: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Seriously ill patients two years and older will now benefit from the province's first portable pediatric medical resonance imaging machine at the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital, which can perform bedside brain imaging scans within minutes. This innovation will allow health care teams to perform MRI [medical resonance imaging] scans quickly and safely at a patient's bedside, resulting in faster diagnoses and improved outcomes for children and their families.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital Foundation who spearheaded a partnership with Synergy 8 Community Builders and major donor Gene Pidwerbesky. Together they raised \$1 million to purchase this pediatric portable MRI. Our government will provide \$419,000 annually to the Saskatchewan Health Authority to support the MRI's operational costs and be available for children eight hours a day, five days a week. This funding also includes supports for a new MRI technologist position.

I would also like to acknowledge the pediatric physicians and support staff at the Jim Pattison Children's Hospital for their exceptional leadership and expertise in providing quality care to our youngest patients. I saw first-hand that exceptional care last August when I was present for my granddaughter Victoria's birth. I ask that all members join me in thanking everyone who helped to bring the first portable pediatric MRI to our province, one of the first machines of its kind in Canada. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Weyburn-Big Muddy.

**2024 Saskatchewan Oil & Gas Show
To Be Held in Weyburn**

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in 1984, a group of volunteers formed the Weyburn Oil Show Board to sponsor and promote the biannual Oil & Gas industry trade show in Weyburn. The last show, in 2022, was a smashing success with over 4,500 attendees, 250-plus exhibitors, and with guest speakers like the late Rex Murphy. The Southeast Sask Legends Award was awarded to Ken Lee, Pierre Mondor, Ray Frehlick, Ron Carson, and Vi Day, and Derrick Big Eagle received the Laurence M. Woodard Southeast Oilperson of the Year.

Mr. Speaker, this year's event is shaping up to be even better. Led by Chairman Dan Cugnet, who's joined us in the west gallery, the show kicks off on June 4th with the customary golf tournament. And later that afternoon, a new event: the Outlaw Buckers & Oil Kings Match Bronc Riding.

This year there will be recognition of people like Paul Cheung, Dean Gilliss, Dean Lemieux, Darcy Cretin, Jim Larter, and James Baker. The Southeast Oilperson of the Year is Ryan Birnie, and the Sask Oil and Gas Hall of Fame will induct Myron Stadnyk and Brad Wall. As well, Mr. Speaker, the Saskatchewan Oilperson of the Year will be Del Mondor. Congratulations to all

the recipients.

I would invite all members to come down to Weyburn to take in the show and see the sights while they're there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Melville-Saltcoats.

Government Support for the Agriculture Sector

Mr. Kaeding: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. More great news with our agri-food exports. In 2023 Saskatchewan exported over \$7 billion worth of agri-food products to the Indo-Pacific region. This region remains a top destination for our exports. Our trade offices in Japan, India, Indonesia, Bangladesh, and China play a key role in securing these markets.

While our government is telling our world-class agricultural story in marketing our sustainable products to buyers around the world, the NDP sits here running down the industry and running down the trade offices that support them. They say they can do better on agriculture and that it's time for a change.

Well let's look at what they did and did not do when they were in government. The NDP closed 31 regional ag offices. They never had world trade offices. They never provided the crop insurance bundle offered today. They never had a forage rainfall insurance program. They never had a livestock price insurance program, never had a wildlife damage compensation program, never had a farm ranch water program, and they slashed research funding.

Mr. Speaker, under this Premier and this government, we've seen record funding in agriculture, record funding in research, record funding in irrigation, and record agri-food exports already surpassing our 2030 growth plan target.

This is a government that is proud of our record on agriculture. We will always stand up for and have the backs of our agriculture industry. We wish all producers, ag producers, a very successful year.

QUESTION PERIOD

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Cost of Living and Government's Fiscal Management

Ms. Beck: — Mr. Speaker, this tired and out-of-touch government is failing to deliver the cost-of-living relief that Saskatchewan people need and that they deserve. Nothing new in their election year budget to help the 57 per cent of families in this province struggling to pay for groceries. In fact the Sask Party voted unanimously against our motion to provide fuel tax relief.

Now the Premier hasn't been able to find his feet all week, but I'm going to ask him this question again. How could you do that to Saskatchewan people?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Moe: — Time and time again throughout this session what we've seen is the Leader of the Opposition get up and put forward her proposal to cut the highways budget in the province of Saskatchewan, Mr. Speaker.

And I think in many ways I think Saskatchewan people should be, you know, quite content with respect to . . . Over the course of this year, Mr. Speaker, what we have seen is the NDP opposition in an election year come up with essentially one idea. The challenge is they haven't come up with how they are going to pay for that idea, Mr. Speaker.

What you see in this budget, Mr. Speaker, titled *Classrooms, Care & Communities* is record investment in each of those categories: classrooms; record investment in our health care system, over 10 per cent; and record investment in our communities across the province.

What you see in this budget, Mr. Speaker, is a continued ability to keep our income tax rates low, where we cut the income tax when we formed government, Mr. Speaker. You see the education property tax continued at a low rate, Mr. Speaker, because when we came to government there was protests in the hallways of this very building. We cut the education property tax and have held it, Mr. Speaker.

You see the investment in the SAID [Saskatchewan assured income for disability] program, the investment in the graduate retention program so that all of these students that have joined us today, when they choose a career and choose to stay in Saskatchewan, they'll be able to have the benefit of capturing some of their tuition rates back, Mr. Speaker. This is in contrast to the members opposite that have had one idea and no plan on how to pay for it.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Donations to Political Parties

Ms. Beck: — I hate to burst the Premier's bubble, Mr. Speaker, but a growing number of people in this province are somewhat less than content with this government's record.

Now this fall, Saskatchewan people are going to have a choice. They can vote for change or they can vote for this tired and out-of-touch government. Unfortunately though, Mr. Speaker, that choice won't be made with the openness and the transparency that Saskatchewan people deserve.

Saskatchewan remains the wild west when it comes to campaign financing. No cap on donations. Union and corporate donations free flow. And donations come in from outside of Saskatchewan and outside of Canada. Mr. Speaker, Saskatchewan democracy should belong to Saskatchewan people.

Why won't the Sask Party fix our broken campaign laws and get big money out of Saskatchewan politics?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Well that you very much, Mr. Speaker. I

believe that it was the self-proclaimed ethics and morality as our member for Regina Elphinstone who vowed to never again pursue corporate or union donations. And she should have run that one by her leader, Mr. Speaker, who desperately pursued any and all corporate donations to her exclusive cocktail party, begging them to send money, Mr. Speaker.

Also awkward, given that union donations fund their campaigns, Mr. Speaker. For one, CUPE [Canadian Union of Public Employees], which is run by that leader's campaign Chair, donated \$49,000 to the NDP last year. Unions overall eclipse any other funding sources for that side, Mr. Speaker, over 20 per cent.

They say the only reasons that someone supports or lobbies for a party is to get a sweetheart deal, Mr. Speaker. They have a lot of sweethearts right over there, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Leader of the Opposition.

Ms. Beck: — Well here's a proposal for the Premier: get big money out of Saskatchewan politics. Mr. Speaker, it's a no-brainer. But this tired and out-of-touch government is far too interested in rewarding their insiders and their donors and not nearly, Mr. Speaker, not nearly interested enough in delivering for Saskatchewan people.

Now remember, this is a government that settled the lawsuit for \$11 million with one of their biggest corporate donors, a government that handed a sole-source contract to a Calgary-based donor to perform medical procedures that should be available here at home in the public system. But everywhere you look, Mr. Speaker, under the Sask Party government there's another donor or another insider with Saskatchewan people footing the bill.

Why won't the Sask Party do something and get big money out of Saskatchewan politics?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Mr. Speaker, they talk a big game about transparency over there. And, Mr. Speaker, they should look back. They should look back through their record, Mr. Speaker.

We have David Forbes, the former member for Saskatoon Centre, questioning the need for a lobbyist registry, for example, Mr. Speaker. He said it was absurd, an absurd idea. We invented, we brought in the lobbyist registry, Mr. Speaker. We brought in lobbyist legislation to cast light, to shed sunlight in all those areas of darkness which the member for Regina Elphinstone likes to talk about so much.

And it was that member, Mr. Speaker, David Forbes, who appointed his brother, Mr. Speaker. John Nilson appointed his brother. And it was Reginald Forbes who was appointed to the Moose Jaw Housing Authority the month after Mr. Forbes was elected.

Mr. Nilson thought his brother was a heck of a guy to appoint to . . .

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina

Elphinstone-Centre.

Transparency Regarding Lobbyists and Access to Information

Ms. Conway: — You know, Mr. Speaker, only that Justice minister would invite us to a street fight with two arms tied behind her back. It's not going to happen, Mr. Speaker. It would be nice if they could speak to their record, let alone defend it.

It's long past time that the Sask Party got big money out of Saskatchewan politics once and for all. But that's the beginning. We've been asking about the role the lobbying of Kevin Doherty played in influencing this government when they decided to award a sole-source contract to a private company in Alberta, providing surgeries at 10 times the cost instead of building health care up right here at home at a time when we have the worst hip- and knee-surgery wait times in the country.

Still no answers. Still no answers about how many times the Health minister met on this Doherty deal. And at the end of the day, lobbying is legitimate if it's transparent, Mr. Speaker. We believe Saskatchewan people deserve to know who is influencing their decision makers about what.

Do they agree Saskatchewan's lobbying scheme is failing to do just that?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — Just some names to put out there to counter the obsession with Mr. Doherty, Mr. Speaker: Bernie Churko, John Nilson, Reginald Forbes, John Solomon, Jack Messer, Mr. Speaker, Judy Junor. Check them out. Check them out, Mr. Speaker.

And that side, under the NDP, the province received a grade of F from the National Freedom of Information Audit. Their score was only 44 per cent. The Information and Privacy Commissioner said at the time, Mr. Speaker, that the NDP government appeared to have a "somewhat relaxed approach to access and privacy rights of citizens," Mr. Speaker. I'll say. I'll say, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, that member is introducing bills that haven't been seen yet, that we have not read yet, Mr. Speaker. That side has had four years to introduce these bills, Mr. Speaker. It's a stunt. We don't have to stunt. Our commitment to transparency is serious, it's deep, and it is long-standing, Mr. Speaker.

[14:45]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — Their commitment to transparency is such that they can't even tell us who met with Kevin Doherty, about what, and when. That's all we've asked, Mr. Speaker.

It's not just big money. It's not just the partisan appointments and the murky lobbying. We're tired of being the butt of national exposés around access to information. Last week, the Sask Party

received another last-place trophy for accountability when it was reported that 13 government agencies withheld documents to the commissioner that he recommended be released. It's long past time that the Information and Privacy Commissioner be given the power to compel — not just recommend, but to compel — the release of information.

We believe an open and transparent government is an accountable government, Mr. Speaker. Why won't the Sask Party commit to doing just that today?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

Hon. Ms. Eyre: — So do we, and the information was provided. And our legislative duty around freedom of information was satisfied.

In that case that that member is citing, Mr. Speaker, all the information was provided. There was no objection made by *The Globe and Mail* to the information itself. All the information was provided, but in PDF [portable document format] format to protect the integrity of the information and the metadata, Mr. Speaker.

If these documents were released with no redactions — they laugh — the government would be in a position where it was releasing personal information of individuals other than the applicant, which would itself constitute a privacy breach. Mr. Speaker, I trust, I trust that even the member opposite would agree that that is not a desirable outcome.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Awarding of Contracts and Request to Conflict of Interest Commissioner

Ms. Conway: — It's not just on transparency that they're failing. It's becoming clear that they're failing on conflicts of interest too. What we now see from this government is a pattern of conflict of public monies flowing out to private companies to which these members are connected.

The Minister of Education was elected in 2020, but that didn't stop his involvement with the family business that he managed, Fortress Windows & Doors. He continued to collect a paycheque with side hustles as an advisor, as a salesperson, including periods of time when hundreds of thousands of public money went out to that private business from SaskTel and Sask Housing. No exemption from the law's prohibition in participating in public contracts was given under the Act. Today I formally asked the Conflict of Interest Commissioner to examine this matter and to see if it was in breach of the Act.

So to the Minister of Social Services: is he confident that these Sask Housing contracts are totally compliant with the law?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Social Services.

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Mr. Speaker, my understanding is the letter was received about half an hour ago, Mr. Speaker, by the member. So . . .

[Interjections]

Appointments to SaskPower Board

The Speaker: — Order.

I recognize the Minister of Social Services.

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Mr. Speaker, once again the member opposite, unfortunately but not surprising, is besmirching a member of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker. This letter that she referenced, my understanding was received about half an hour ago. Very interesting timing based on where we are in the legislative process.

But, Mr. Speaker, we all know, all the members know on the floor that all MLAs disclose any relevant information to the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, who is an independent officer of the legislature and of course is why we have one in the first place, Mr. Speaker, to adjudicate any potential situations. So, Mr. Speaker, I trust that the Conflict Commissioner will look at anything that's brought forward by that member and will look at it in due course.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, we also have questions about conflicts of interest at the Sunrise and Thriftlodge motels. I asked about this yesterday. No answer. Their only answer to this entire mess? A pilot project, Mr. Speaker. Not good enough. These motels went from 1,300 in business before the member from Northeast was elected to three-quarters of a million after. And the member from Regina Northeast never got an exemption from the ban on government contracts.

Again, I've asked the commissioner to look into this too, as I believe the member from Regina Northeast was in direct breach of the Act that bars conflicts of interest. How confident is the Minister of Social Services that all these public dollars flowing to his officemate's hotels were compliant with the law?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Social Services.

Hon. Mr. Makowsky: — Mr. Speaker, I've talked about this matter many times in the House, in committee, and various other ways to do that, Mr. Speaker. Of course the answer I've given is, and maybe the member opposite wasn't paying attention, of course — valued by me — the nonpartisan public service has weighed in on this, Mr. Speaker.

Monday, April 15th, 2024, on page 642 of *Hansard*, the deputy minister of Social Services, Kimberly Kratzig, said, I'm quoting here:

I think it's really important to note that at no point in any of our use of hotels has the Minister of Social Services ever directed placement of an individual in any hotel.

Does the member agree with that statement by my deputy minister, Mr. Speaker?

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina University.

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. We have so many questions about the conflicts of interest with this tired and out-of-touch government, but the questions don't stop with their private business dealings. They also extend to patronage appointments.

With the Sask Party government, Mr. Speaker, it's all about helping friends and insiders help the Sask Party. We saw that with the Premier's pal, Porky Porter. We saw that with the Justice minister and the Human Rights Commission. And we see this again, Mr. Speaker, with the SaskPower board. Since 2007 SaskPower board appointees and the companies they're connected to have donated more than half a million dollars to the Sask Party.

Is the Sask Party board a governance board for this billion-dollar Crown corporation, or a fundraising committee for the Sask Party?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments Corporation.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I can't believe the member opposite is asking this question. When you look at the people, the qualified individuals that serve on many of our Crown boards, Mr. Speaker, people like Chief Darcy Bear who's the Chair of the SaskPower board, Mr. Speaker. Or our most recent board appointment, Mr. Speaker, Rumina Velshi from Toronto who is the most recent president and CEO of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, Mr. Speaker.

We are looking for qualified individuals in this province, and in some occasions out of the province, Mr. Speaker, to ensure that we have proper board oversight. I find it shameful that the members opposite would try to make a political issue out of this.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina University.

Ms. A. Young: — Mr. Speaker, let's be very clear for the minister. It's not about individuals. This is about the price of admission, which is half a million dollars to that government. Sask people expect that the boards of our critical Crown corporations should be run arm's length from this government. They should not be fundraising for this government.

Mr. Speaker, more than half a million dollars has been raised from wealthy donors and their businesses. Meanwhile, meanwhile, Mr. Speaker, SaskPower has jacked rates on people three times in two years, all the while people are struggling to pay their bills.

How does the minister justify appointing so many Sask Party donors to that board?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments Corporation.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again we look for qualified individuals from across the

province and, in some cases, outside of the province when it comes to particular expertise, Mr. Speaker. That is the case with our most recent board appointment, Rumina Velshi, as I said before, the most recent president and CEO of the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, the same would be true with Chief Darcy Bear, who I think is a well-respected individual in this province, Mr. Speaker. We will continue if we have the privilege of forming government, Mr. Speaker. We'll continue to ensure that we have well-qualified individuals, Mr. Speaker, regardless of who they support politically to appoint to our Crown boards.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina University.

Ms. A. Young: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. But to the average person, the qualification seems to be a willingness to donate half a million dollars to that government.

The Sask Party government's failure to ensure that Crowns are operating independently, it comes with consequences. It's how we end up with a string of mismanaged projects and billion-dollar overruns at SaskPower, Mr. Speaker. A reminder: the GTH [Global Transportation Hub] land deal, financed by Bill Boyd and SaskPower. Nearly half a billion dollars of cost overruns at BD3 [Boundary dam 3]. For the first time in history, Mr. Speaker, \$172 million loss at SaskPower, not to mention \$500 million in Sask Party carbon taxes.

It is Saskatchewan people who pay for these boondoggles, but it's the Sask Party who keeps cashing in on donations. Doesn't the minister realize that stacking the boards with Sask Party donors forces Saskatchewan people to pay the price?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments Corporation.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would ask the member opposite who she has a problem with. Is it Chief Darcy Bear from Dakota Whitecap First Nation? Is it Don Atchison, the former mayor of Saskatoon, Mr. Speaker? Is it Amber Biemans, a lawyer from Humboldt, Mr. Speaker? Is it Fred Matheson, Mr. Speaker, a former Citizen of the Year from Prince Albert? Is it Jeff Richards, a city councillor from the city of Weyburn, Mr. Speaker? Who specifically does she have a problem with?

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

Population Growth and Public Services

Ms. Wilson: — Mr. Speaker, it is no secret that our public services are failing and not keeping up. Health care, education, policing, infrastructure — none of them are adequately providing for the Saskatchewan people. Mr. Speaker, the government's mandate is to faithfully provide these services to its residents. They are failing. It doesn't make any sense to continue the record increase of new residents to Saskatchewan when we are struggling to provide for the residents we already have. This is a complete mismanagement of our ministries and a disservice to Saskatchewan citizens.

When will the government end their mismanagement and pause the increase of new residents until we can properly provide services to all Saskatchewan residents we already have?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Trade and Export Development.

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Mr. Speaker, I think we canvassed this question last week with the member opposite who . . . The shorter version of what she's asking is, she doesn't like immigration. That's really what she's getting at, Mr. Speaker.

On this side of the House, we welcome newcomers from around the world. In fact, we welcomed newcomers from across the country and around the world to the tune of over 200,000 people over the course of the last 17 years. Whether those be from the Ukraine, whether those be folks from the Philippines, whether those be folks from all other parts of the world, Mr. Speaker, we believe that these individuals enrich the life here of this province and contribute to our economic well-being as we go forward.

That member has made clear her views. We fundamentally disagree. And I think, frankly, every member in this House fundamentally disagrees with her, on both sides of the aisle.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

Ms. Wilson: — Mr. Speaker, residents from all over the province are telling us they don't see any real leadership in this government. Our health care, our finances, our education, our sovereignty, and our place in Confederation all require strong, capable leadership with the will to fight for the Saskatchewan people. Yet residents continue to tell us they are tired of the Sask Party's smoke and mirrors. They are tired of the excuses as to why our public services are failing, debt keeps increasing, and the cost of living keeps going up.

What does the Premier and his government have to say to the Saskatchewan people that feel there isn't any competent leadership running our province? What do they have to say to those that feel our province is worse off now than it was six years ago?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Trade and Export Development.

Hon. Mr. J. Harrison: — Well I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, what we continue to be focused on is growing our economy here in this province and creating opportunities for people here at home. A big part of the way that we do that, Mr. Speaker, is by attracting investment from outside of the province and exporting our goods around the world, literally providing the food, fuel, and fertilizer that provides security, both energy and food, for literally billions of people around the globe. We're working with our job creators; we're working with our companies.

In fact we've increased exports, Mr. Speaker, from \$16 billion in 2006 to over \$50 billion over the course of the last two years, \$101 billion in total over that period of time, Mr. Speaker. That doesn't come without work, something that we're going to continue to focus on because that's what creates wealth here in Saskatchewan and creates jobs for our young people and their

ability to stay here in Saskatchewan and build their lives.

[15:00]

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

Government's Energy Policies

Ms. Wilson: — Mr. Speaker, I want to make something very clear. Sask United is not opposed to nuclear energy. We are, however, highly skeptical of this government's plan for unproven and experimental small modular reactors. As I've stated before, there are only two operational in the world, located in China and Russia.

Dozens of SMR [small modular reactor] projects around the world are being postponed or cancelled. The data is just not there to bet the future of our energy grid on SMRs. It is absolutely foolish to gut our coal and natural gas for wind, solar, and experimental SMRs.

I ask the government again: will they scrap their net zero agenda and continue to invest in coal beyond 2042?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments Corporation.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Mr. Speaker, we are going to take an all-of-the-above approach, including natural gas, including coal, Mr. Speaker, and as well as SMRs. We are looking at that as well as adding renewables, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I would just say, in terms of net zero, I think the only thing that is net zero is going to be the number of United members in this House after the election.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatchewan Rivers.

Treatment for Addictions and Curbing Access to Drugs

Ms. Wilson: — Mr. Speaker, we know all too well our province is plagued by the poison of fentanyl. It claims lives and destroys families. Can the government explain their comprehensive plan to address this epidemic? Where is the war on drugs?

I'm not interested in hearing line items in the budget quoted to me. More money being thrown at a problem doesn't solve it. What is the government doing today? How are they stopping the supply of fentanyl? How are they removing it off the streets? How are they tackling the organized crime that is trafficking it?

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Mental Health and Addictions.

Hon. Mr. T. McLeod: — Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. As I've said many times, the strategy of this government is to focus on treatment and recovery. If individuals aren't using illicit drugs like fentanyl, they aren't overdosing on illicit drugs like fentanyl, Mr. Speaker.

To that end, we've announced the mental health and addiction

action plan last October. That plan is expanding addictions treatment capacity across the province. It's making it easier for people to access those treatment spaces. And, Mr. Speaker, it's providing individuals who are in treatment with the recovery-oriented system of care that wraps supports around them and gives the individual supports that they need on their individualized journey to recovery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 617 — *The Members' Conflict of Interest Amendment Act*

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 617, *The Members' Conflict of Interest Amendment Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre that Bill No. 617 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the bill be read a second time? I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — At the next sitting of the Assembly.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 618 — *The Lobbyists Transparency Amendment Act*

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 618, *The Lobbyists Transparency Amendment Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre that Bill No. 618 be now read and introduced a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the bill be read a second time? I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — At the next sitting of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 619 — *The Election (Fairness and Accountability) Amendment Act*

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 619, *The Election (Fairness and Accountability) Amendment Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre that Bill 619 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the bill be read a second time? I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — At the next sitting of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 620 — *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Amendment Act*

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 620, *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Amendment Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre that Bill No. 620 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the bill be read a second time? I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — At the next sitting of the Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 621 — *The Child and Family Services (Betty's Law) Amendment Act*

The Speaker: — I recognize the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 621, *The Child and Family Services (Betty's Law) Amendment Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member for Regina Elphinstone-Centre that Bill No. 621 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the bill be read a second time? I recognize the member from Regina Elphinstone-Centre.

Ms. Conway: — At the next sitting of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

Bill No. 622 — *The Residents-in-Care Bill of Rights Act*

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Mr. Love: — Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 622, *The Residents-in-Care Bill of Rights Act* be now introduced and read a first time.

The Speaker: — It has been moved by the member from Saskatoon Eastview that Bill No. 622 be now introduced and read a first time. Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried.

Deputy Clerk: — First reading of this bill.

The Speaker: — When shall the bill be read a second time? I recognize the member from Saskatoon Eastview.

Mr. Love: — At the next sitting of the Assembly.

The Speaker: — Next sitting.

BEFORE ORDERS OF THE DAY

The Speaker: — Yesterday a couple of members spoke about the personal attacks and character assassination. I received this letter from the Sergeant-at-Arms during the fall session of 2021, when Bill No. 70 was introduced. With permission from Terry and his wife, I would like to enter into the record a letter from the former Sergeant-at-Arms, Terry Quinn, and parts of an email from Terry Quinn's spouse to former minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety concerning the character assassination they endured.

The letter is dated November 29th, 2021. It says:

Mr. Speaker, there has been so many shameful untruths and

innuendoes regarding my performance as a leader, as well as the performance of the Sergeant-at-Arms, or SAA, team that I know it is time for me to give my side of this smear campaign.

My reputation has been defamed and I have felt harassed by the statements of Minister Tell both in and outside the Chamber since the bill was introduced. It is time that I have a chance to speak, just like the ones that have been speaking about me.

To start I will give a brief summary of who I am and how I believe I ended up in the position of Sergeant-at-Arms. I spent 35 years in the RCMP, with the majority of those years in Saskatchewan. My roles included general detachment duties. I also worked on a First Nations reserve. I have led successful narcotics enforcement teams in Saskatchewan as well as in Nova Scotia.

Also while in Nova Scotia I was in charge of the Atlantic region immigration and passport section, which was very successful in undoing a major immigration fraud scheme, as well as investigating human trafficking smuggling files in the region. I also led a team of serious and organized investigators while there.

In the middle of the noted postings above, I was successfully chosen from the RCMP members throughout Canada to become RCMP international liaison officer in Hong Kong, with my area of coverage at that time being Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Macau, and as well as Hong Kong.

This was a quasi-diplomatic position run out of the consulate. It was very sensitive and required a top secret security clearance. I spent four years in Hong Kong, successfully fulfilling my obligations. I also spent almost a year in Sri Lanka during the migrant boat crisis, doing a similar job.

The above paragraphs are my answer as to why I believe I was successful in getting the SAA position. My performance reviews since acquiring the position have been excellent. Here are a few of the changes in the legislative security since I started. We have gone from 14 very poor-quality video cameras to 38 high-quality cameras inside and outside. We now have three metal detectors, two at the main entrance and one at the Prince of Wales entrance. There's an X-ray scanner at the front entrance. There are now sliding security doors at both the service entrance and the Prince of Wales entrance. Two additional special constables have been hired, bringing our total to five. The Premier's protection detail has more staff than the Sergeant-at-Arms.

There's been a number of security reports done on the Legislative Building since 2014, with all identifying the need to enhance security. I was part of a committee that was formed in the spring of 2019 to discuss security within the park and Legislative Building. Led by Central Services, it included Justice, Corrections and Policing, Provincial Capital Commission, and myself. I put forward a number of recommendations for building security, but I believe the only result that came out of all these meetings was the formation of the Premier's protective detail.

I was quite shocked when Minister Tell and her chief of staff came to meet me on Friday morning, November 26th, '21. She asked me how I was feeling, and I replied, "battered." What other words could be used? Minister Tell wondered what went wrong with the process. She did state that the bill would be passed.

It was then offered the role of ceremonial SAA, as well as the director of the new service. I was quite stunned by this, as all my focus was on would my staff be able to keep their jobs when the change happens. To go from a pariah to being asked to lead the new unit under the Corrections ministry was shocking. I asked if this means my staff could stay. I was given a positive response.

I am aware that the government has the power and the right to pass this bill by April. I felt I had the next number of months to decide if this was the right thing for me to do.

Minister Tell has said on numerous occasions there have been a number of incidents that have happened that has led to the government to not have confidence in the SAA. I wanted to know what these incidents were. The chief of staff then went on to relate three incidents that were not related to breaching of any security within the building, and if they had been brought to my attention, would have been dealt with individually.

One was the incident in room 355, which was on a weekend and between ministry employees. A government minister came to see me about this, and as a result, I spoke with the commissionaire on duty at the time. As you are aware, extra security measures were put in place as a result of this incident.

On Friday afternoon, I received a call from Corrections and Policing ADM Bob Cameron. He called to welcome me to the team. He would agree that I was rather speechless. I was not on anyone's team but the SAA. The bill hadn't even gone to second reading.

Mr. Cameron advised that we should meet as soon as possible to get things going. He also indicated that under the ministry we would probably get some of the security proposals that I had been putting forward actioned. This phone call really shook me up and I sent an email to Minister Tell's chief of staff stating that I am not interested in discussing any further structure because the matter is under debate in the Assembly.

All this was . . . led to my being questioned by numerous people about what was happening to the SAA and why are we being accused of incompetence. Up until now I have been silent. I am going to start answering these questions when asked. This correspondence is to advise that I am not tolerating harassment.

Sincerely,
Terry Quinn, Sergeant-at-Arms
Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan

[15:15]

I will read parts of the email that was sent to the former minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety. The email starts out:

Christine,

My name is Edith Cormier. I am Terry Quinn's wife. Terry and I were both long-term public servants, so we completely understand the right of government to govern as it sees fit. What is not okay is tearing down a human being to achieve these ends. I watched you diminish the work of my husband. To my ears, my words were harsh, they hurt our family, and they were completely unnecessary for you to achieve your goal.

I support women in politics and in non-traditional roles. It is encouraging to see women who are successful, but I don't support men or women who tear down others in the attempt to boost their agenda.

Our family will heal in time. I hope you will reflect and learn. We felt humiliated. You need to know and understand that when you speak harshly so publicly about another human being and call into question their work, there are consequences to them and their family.

Sincerely,
Edith

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

ADJOURNED DEBATES

MOTIONS

Retiring Members

[The Assembly resumed the adjourned debate on the proposed motion by the Hon. Mr. Moe.]

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Advanced Education.

Hon. Mr. Wyant: — Mr. Speaker, it's kind of bittersweet standing up in the legislature today after serving here for 14 years, and I remember Premier Wall when he gave his farewell speech. He said that it was the honour of his life to serve in this legislature, Mr. Speaker, and I can't agree more. It's been the honour of my life to serve the people of Saskatoon Northwest over these many years, Mr. Speaker.

But again before I make a few personal comments, Mr. Speaker, a number of people that I need to thank. First of all I want to thank the constituents of Saskatoon Northwest, Mr. Speaker. They've returned me to the legislature four times. I'm not really sure what they saw in me over those four years, especially given some of the campaigns that we ran, but I'm very, very grateful for the fact that they saw something in me to represent them on the floor of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker. It's very, very, very humbling, Mr. Speaker.

I want to thank my executive that's been providing support to me

over those many years, Mr. Speaker, and I want to name them personally because many of them have become very, very good friends of mine, Mr. Speaker. Doug and Jackie Shaw, I must say that Doug and I spent a considerable amount of time during the leadership campaign, Mr. Speaker, in a truck driving all over Saskatchewan. Forty thousand kilometres, and I could hardly explain to my brother why I put \$40,000 on his truck without having to buy it from him. But Doug, you learn a lot about somebody, having spent that much time in a vehicle, Mr. Speaker, and I'm glad to say that Doug has become one of my very, very good friends and a great supporter of mine over the years, Mr. Speaker.

Ray Sladek, my finance guy, Mr. Speaker. He's been with me since I've been in the legislature. Very, very competent, and again he too has become a very, very good friend. Mr. Speaker, my president, Terry Uhrich. Other members of my executive: Grant Vogelsang, Bob Callander, Nolan Blackstock, Amy Wall, Neal Seaman, Lauren Hill, Jocelyne Kost, and Fred Wesolowski, Mr. Speaker, as I said before, literally served with me for many, many years.

Mr. Speaker, I introduced my long-suffering CA already, who's been with me for almost 10 years, Mr. Speaker. And as I said in my introduction, no office runs well without a good CA. And I am fortunate to have one of the best in the province, so thanks very much, Sara, for being here.

Mr. Speaker, it's often said that no one in this Assembly serves alone, and certainly the case with me, Mr. Speaker. I want to specifically acknowledge my wife, Christine. We've been married for 24 years now, Mr. Speaker. She's been supportive of my entire career, Mr. Speaker, whether that was on a school board or Saskatoon City Council or here in the legislature, Mr. Speaker. Members in the House will know her as an entrepreneur, Mr. Speaker. They'll know her as a mentor, a woman who is very vocal about women in leadership, Mr. Speaker. Speaks around the world in conferences around women in leadership, and we're so very, very proud of her, Mr. Speaker.

My children: Allison; my son Stephen and his partner, Maddie; my son Jeremy and his partner, Brittney; my daughter Kayla and her partner, Nathan; and my granddaughter Mia, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, members of the Assembly will know that my little granddaughter Mia is autistic, Mr. Speaker. And I know how thankful we were when the Government of Saskatchewan introduced individualized funding for children with autism, Mr. Speaker. More to do, Mr. Speaker, but as a family we are so very, very thankful for the work that the government did in supporting individualized funding for those kids, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to acknowledge my brothers as well: Peter, Raymond, Vaughn, and David. They're all very, very successful in their own right, Mr. Speaker, and so I wanted to acknowledge them. And I want to also acknowledge my parents, Mr. Speaker, parents who taught me and my brothers the value of hard work, the value of respect. And I know they'd be very, very proud of me, knowing that I'm standing in the legislature today, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I've been very privileged over the years to have great ministerial offices, Mr. Speaker. And in my ministerial office today, Dawn-Marie, Austin Rock, and Jodi Holten are

here, as well as my chief of staff, Mr. Speaker, who I'll introduce in a little bit.

Dawn-Marie has been with me almost every day since I've been a member of cabinet except for just a few days. I think there was a little bit of time when she wasn't my minister, Mr. Speaker. I wouldn't know what to do without her. She keeps a lot of my secrets, which was very, very good, and if ever I need a credit card number or a passcode for something, she has all that information in her desk, Mr. Speaker. I don't know what I'd do without her. I'm going to greatly, I'm going to greatly miss her. She's been just wonderful. I was privileged to be the officiant at her wedding last year, and that was just a huge honour for me. So, Dawn, thank you very much for all you've done for me.

Mr. Speaker, I've had a raft of chiefs of staff, and I want to mention them each individually: Molly Waldman, Amanda Plummer, Jill Stroeder, Sophie Ferré, Ang Currie, Ashley Boha, Julie Leggott, Stacey Ferguson, Michelle Lang, and Mary Donlevy-Konkin, Mr. Speaker. And if anyone was paying any attention to that, they'll notice that they're all women. Mr. Speaker, I don't know what that says about me and my offices, Mr. Speaker. I need somebody strong in my office to keep me in line, Mr. Speaker, and I'm really thankful for all that they've done.

And I especially want to thank Michelle who's here. She's become a very, very good friend of mine and her family have become good friends of mine. And I want specifically again wanted to acknowledge Mary Donlevy-Konkin. And I know she's watching, Mr. Speaker, in Ottawa. She's currently special advisor to the president of Sask Polytechnic, so we spend quite a bit of time talking back and forth about the project that we're working on in Saskatoon. She's a great source of advice, Mr. Speaker. And whenever I need some advice, whether it's political or personal, she's typically the person that I call for that advice, much like I used to speak to her brother Joe. And I know we all miss Joe Donlevy who passed away, a great supporter of my political career and a great individual who provided me advice. And now I rely on Mary for that advice and it's always very, very sage advice, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge as well the deputy ministers that I've had over the years. In Justice, Mr. Speaker, Gerry Tegart, K.C. [King's Counsel]; Kevin Fenwick, K.C.; and Glen Gardner, K.C. Mr. Speaker, what I really admired about those three individuals was their respect for the rule of law, Mr. Speaker. It's certainly the number one responsibility of any lawyer to defend and protect the rule of law, Mr. Speaker. And I could always count on each one of those individuals as my deputy minister to provide me with the advice that I needed to ensure that I was fulfilling my responsibilities, Mr. Speaker.

In Education, Rob Currie. I'll say this about Rob: he probably forgot more about public education than I ever knew. And I really valued the advice that he brought. Certainly through COVID we had a very, very difficult time in government, as everybody knows. Some of the decisions that we had to make, especially with regard to developing the back-to-school plans that we did in consultation with the STF [Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation], I really want to thank Rob for all his guidance and all the support that he gave.

Mr. Speaker, in Advanced Education, Kim Kratzig, Denise Macza, and my current deputy, Rebecca Carter. And we all know that they don't serve alone either, Mr. Speaker. So a special thanks to all their ministerial staff who supported all my deputy ministers over those many years.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to just acknowledge the two premiers that I've had the privilege of serving under, Premier Moe and Premier Wall. It's certainly been a privilege to serve under you, Premier Moe, and under Premier Wall. And I really want to thank them for the faith and the confidence that they've had in me in some of the significant responsibilities that I've had while I've been here. Especially, Mr. Speaker, given all the significant work that we had to do through COVID, and I specifically wanted to acknowledge Premier Moe for all his support. It was a very, very difficult time for us in government, particularly in Education, so I want to thank Scott for that.

Mr. Speaker, I'm a bit of a reluctant politician. And I was going to tell this story because I had no intention of running for the legislature. In 2007 Premier Wall came to me and asked me if I would run in that election. And I told him that I was pretty happy with the work that I was doing on Saskatoon City Council. I had a very successful law career going on and it wasn't kind of in my plans to do that, much like it wasn't in my plans to join the school board or join Saskatoon City Council. Those just kind of fell in my lap. And so I'd said no.

And so as it turned out in 2009, it was New Year's Eve, 2009-2010. I had the privilege of having dinner with Brad and Tami down in Phoenix with a couple of other couples. And we agreed we were going to check our politics at the door, Mr. Speaker. But during the course of the dinner, of course Brad couldn't be counted on to keep that promise.

So he looked at me at one point in time and he said, "I need you to run in the next election." And I looked at him and I said, "Yeah, okay. I'll do that." So my wife looks at me and she said, she said, "We've never talked about that." And I said, "Well we'll talk about it later." And we did have a conversation in the car on the way home, and it wasn't the most polite one.

But in any event I'd forgotten about that. And a couple of months later the MLA for Saskatoon Northwest, as we all know, got into a little bit of trouble. I got a call from Joe Donlevy. And I was in Florida visiting my uncle. He had fallen and broken his hip, and so I was down there visiting with my brother Raymond. And I got a call from Joe, and Joe said to me, "Have you read the front page of the paper?" And I said, "No." I said, "I'm in Florida." He says, "You have your laptop?" I said, "Yeah." He says, "Well go and read the front page of the paper."

So I did. He calls me back in 10 minutes. He says, "Well the MLA is going to resign. There's going to be a by-election and you're our candidate." And I said to him, "Well I never agreed to that." He says, "Yes you did. You told Brad Wall at Christmastime that you were going to run in the next election." I just didn't know that the next election was going to be four months later, Mr. Speaker. And then I said to Joe, I said, "I don't think you can hold me to that because I was drinking." And he said, "It doesn't matter." He said, "You're going to run for us in the next election."

I came back, Mr. Speaker. There was a nomination. I was acclaimed and I won the election in November of 2010, Mr. Speaker. And a few months . . . well it was about a year and a half later, Mr. Speaker, I got a call from Brad. I met with him and he asked me to be his Attorney General, Mr. Speaker. And that was probably one of the most humbling days of my life, you know, just as a not-so-young lawyer being asked to take on the role as the Attorney General. It's not something that I ever dreamed about doing, but certainly for a lawyer it's quite an accomplishment. And I was very, very proud.

And I didn't know if I was up to it, Mr. Speaker, but Brad seemed to think I was, and so I was happy to accept it. And I want to tell a little story about the first day that I walked into the office. I walked into the office and my chief of staff, Denise Batters, who I didn't mention in the list, but Denise was there. And she came out and she looked at me and she said, "This is quite a day for you." And I said, "Yeah. I'm the Attorney General of Saskatchewan. It's a pretty cool day. Your name's on the door. It's pretty cool." And she says, "Well today you're suing the tobacco companies, and the media will be here in 20 minutes." And all I could think of to myself, was it Morgan who left that little gem for me.

And as I look up on the wall, you see the photographs of all the former attorneys general, Mr. Speaker. You know, you see Turgeon and you see Romanow. You see a number of them, and you see Don Morgan. And Don's little gift to me that day, I had no experience particularly with the media of that kind of size. All of a sudden 20 minutes later I had to prepare for a media interview because Don had neglected to tell me about the fact that we were issuing a statement of claim against the tobacco companies that day.

Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I just want to thank my colleagues for the faith and the confidence and the trust that they've shown in me. I can't mention them all by name. I know I'm going to take some great memories from this building and remember each of them with the trust and the gratitude that I have.

And I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that on this side of the House I have great confidence in this government, Mr. Speaker, the fact that they will carry on the great work that they're doing for the people of Saskatchewan. So I'm pleased to be able to continue to support my colleagues in that regard, Mr. Speaker.

I also want to make a little bit of a comment about the members opposite. I've had some pretty interesting individuals, Mr. Speaker, on the other side of the House who have been my critics. And I specifically want to mention Nicole, who was my Justice critic. And I always thought, Nicole, that you always came to the Assembly and the other work that we did with great respect, and I very much appreciated that.

[15:30]

And I want to say the same thing for the Leader of the Opposition. Carla was my critic when I was the Minister of Education, and I always thought that she brought great respect to the work that she did, especially given the fact that we had some very, very difficult issues to deal with.

And we can't make too many comments about the member from

Rosemont except to say that I'm glad we're not hearing as many questions about the bypass as we used to after we built the bypass for you.

Mr. Speaker, I want to speak just quickly about a couple of the proudest moments that I have had as a legislator.

Certainly as the Attorney General there's been many, many things that have happened on this side of the House that I have been very, very proud of and very proud to be part of this government, Mr. Speaker, but I want to mention two. And they're interesting from the perspective that they both involved unanimous votes across the House, Mr. Speaker.

We had a unanimous vote on the floor of this Assembly when we amended the Canadian Constitution to ensure that the Canadian Pacific Railway pays its fair share of taxes, Mr. Speaker. And I remember the debate that we had, the comments that we had and — Trent, your comments were very good, Mr. Speaker — a unanimous vote of the House that sent that to parliament. And because of ministers Lametti and Champagne we had a unanimous vote on the floor of parliament to amend the Constitution, and almost an unanimous vote in the Senate, Mr. Speaker, save for one or two. And so that was very proud.

Mr. Speaker, I'm also going to comment on one of the other very proud moments I had. And again it was a unanimous vote on the floor of this Assembly where we amended the human rights code to enshrine gender identity as a prohibited ground, Mr. Speaker. Another proud moment that I'll take with me from this building, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, I'm just going to sum up by saying this: it's human nature to show empathy for people who are suffering, and I have been very proud to be part of a government that shows that empathy when issues come to the floor of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, when items come to our constituency offices that we're able to work with those individuals, provide programming.

And there's been many, many programs that have been brought forward by this government over the years to deal with just that, Mr. Speaker. And I can tell you that I have the faith and confidence in this government to continue to do the work that needs to be done to support the people of Saskatchewan, to continue to support the economy.

And we have often said that the economy is the key to everything, Mr. Speaker, and I know we're going to continue to grow that economy, continue to provide the kinds of services that the people of Saskatchewan want, the kind of services that the people of Saskatchewan need. We're going to do that. And I can count on this side of the House and the government to use creative vision to be able to do that, Mr. Speaker.

I'll just finally end by saying that I'm going to take some great memories from this House with me, Mr. Speaker. I'm going to have some great friends that I'll continue to have close relationships with. And when we say that everybody in this House is part of a family, I very much feel that the people on this side of the House have become part of my family, Mr. Speaker.

So with that I'll end my remarks by just saying to the House, to you, Mr. Speaker, to the members of the Assembly, and those

who work in this building, a sincere thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Batoche.

Mr. Kirsch: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I begin my last address in this House, I would like to introduce my family and friends. First of all we say no one serves alone, and so first I must point out my wife, my partner, my friend. She stands beside me. I thank you for the 20-some years. Thank you, dear.

Next — give a wave when I introduce you, please — the next is my daughter Roxanne, who just flew in this morning and will be flying out again this evening. So thank you, dear daughter, for being here.

Next is my daughter Tracy. Tracy does an amazing job on so many things, but the best job she's done are the two little men sitting right beside her, my grandsons Carter and Lincoln. Give grandpa a wave, guys. And beside them is her husband, Mark, one outstanding young gentleman. I thank for him every day

And then there's my son Jonathan. Give us a wave. And beside him is our godson Stephen. And Stephen and Jonathan spent each summer together running wild through the forest, wherever. And they'd always check — because we had Mom and Dad's house and Valerie and I in the same yard — they'd check every evening who had the best supper, and that's where they would decide to go. Wise boys.

Then I've got to introduce my sister Fay. Fay is a renowned cook and chef formerly at Bethany Pioneer Village. Sitting next to her is my baby sister Elaine. Very close with her, and I thank her for all the times that she's helped me through. So thanks, sis.

Beside them, beside them . . . Everybody in the world has to have a great friend. Well I've got one of the greatest, my friend Bernie Mollenbeck. We've been friends for fifty . . . whatever, something like that, decades. Beside him is his wife, Phyllis. Now after we were all dating and everything and Bernie and I were already friends, we found out we were about to marry cousins. So that's a close relationship.

Now I'd like to thank one amazing lady. Mary Anne, give us a wave. Mary Anne Telfer, she's been a CA for 28, 29 — one of those two — years. An amazing lady, always backing me up. And we've become great friends, and I'm sure that's going to continue in the future because Mary Anne and I are both retiring, but the friendship will go on. Thank you, Mary Anne. Thank you very, very much.

I'd also like to thank our Premier. I've served under three leaders of our party and each one has made our party stronger, building a strong group of people supporting them. I'd also thank all my colleagues for being support and being the friends. Thank you for that.

I'd also like to thank the staff of this building. We maybe don't give them enough credit. Like even the ladies cleaning the halls, when you say hi to them, it's so nice to see them light up with such a big smile. They appreciate that we've taken notice. Also the security staff, got to know some of them and they're great people. And I hope we never have to need them but I'm glad they're here.

I'd also like to thank the Pages. Thank you. Now it's all ladies. Thank you for your time and your work. And of course the Speaker's Chair, that's a tough one and I thank you for your time there, Mr. Speaker. I'd also like to thank the Clerks-at-the-Table. Thank you, ladies and gentlemen, for the work you do, the friendship you've shown. Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker, 20 years ago I rose in this House for the first time. I started my maiden speech by saying, "I'm a little nervous being in Regina because the last bearded gentleman from Batoche that came to Regina was hanged." You remember that. Mr. Speaker, I was of course referring to Louis Riel. I went on to say:

I am humbled with tremendous honour and privilege that has been bestowed on me by the people of Batoche. I accept that responsibility and now will speak on their behalf.

Batoche may be a new constituency [at that time], but it is a very old land — a land that is older than Canada; a land as old as its Native people, its Métis people, its early settlers; a land where oppressed people pushed to desperation retaliated [and came to Saskatchewan]. This constituency still holds the descendants of these same people.

These are the words I spoke in this Chamber over 20 years ago. They would still hold true today. I have tried to live up to them for the past 20-plus years. Batoche constituency is a collection of mainly rural people, small towns, villages, and hamlets. The largest two towns have now reached the astounding thousand people. Batoche is growing. I've lived my life entirely in this mainly rural population.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to tell the story of my early years of rural life. I was four years old before we even got electricity. I know coal oil lamps and barn lanterns. Running water meant run out to the well and get some. I learned early how to use an axe; everything was wood fired.

My first four years of school was in a one-room country school with eight grades and one teacher. There was no electricity for our school Christmas party. Every family brought a coal oil lamp to create enough light. Our school had a dry cell radio with a wire antenna strung from the school to the school barn. Sometimes it worked; other times not so much. When wintertime came we went to school in a caboose. Now that's a closed-in cabin heated by a woodstove and pulled by a team of horses.

Grade 5 finally came and a big change took place. Our country school was shut down and a big yellow bus took us to the metropolis of Middle Lake. Actually Middle Lake was 150 people. My school in Middle Lake only had up to grade 11 so that meant another huge change for me. I was sent to Luther College here in Regina for grade 12. After that I was finally done with school and I was able to pursue my dream: horses and saddles and lush green pastures, newborn calves, and the making of summer hay.

I would like to publicly thank my Valerie for being my partner both in life and in business. We ran a cattle ranch of 300-plus and a grain farm. That wasn't all we did. We also had a small dairy for about 20 years. Small dairies were eventually squeezed out, so we sold our dairy and went to auction school in 1995. Valerie became the first female auctioneer of the Saskatchewan

Auctioneers Association. Through all of this we've been blessed with three brilliant children that we are so, so proud of.

Next I was vice-president of the new Batoche constituency. After a few turns and all of the sudden I became the first MLA for the new constituency of Batoche. Mr. Speaker, after getting elected I vividly remember my first trip to the legislature. I got out of my car and walked to the steps of this magnificent building. I looked up, looked to my right, looked to my left, and said to myself, what have you done? This had been my dream and now it was a reality. I then said, God help me.

Mr. Speaker, the biggest disappointment I have after becoming an MLA is some friends who, upon realizing I was of a different political stripe, were no longer friends and rejected any contact. This is a sad reality of politics.

[15:45]

I have been told that the line of respect, politicians rank near the bottom. I would reject this premise completely for the following reason. As we've been told by the Clerk the other week, we now have had 776 MLAs in this province since 1905 when this province was born. Yes, there have been some real scoundrels, bad apples, whatever you want to call them. I don't deny that. But by far the vast majority have worked very hard for the betterment of their constituency and their province.

Mr. Speaker, I've seen some beautiful things take place in this legislature. They are things that have grown this province and make it a better place to live and raise a family. Sadly though, I've seen some very sad actions that have been an attack on democracy.

Winston Churchill said, and I quote, "Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the rest." It's not perfect, but what we have here in Saskatchewan is among the best in the entire world. I've often described democracy as a flower. It takes a lot of care and nurturing to grow a beautiful flower, but it can easily be destroyed. Here in this House, I've seen petals of democracy torn down and destroyed. Yes, it's only one petal, but it always starts with one.

So many countries around the world see what we have and can only dream of this for their own country. We have the responsibility to keep our democracy strong. We have had sons and daughters of this province place their lives on the line. Some have even died for the great goal of democracy and freedom. I'm very proud to say that my father gave four years of his life to defend our freedom and democracy.

I must say I've seen too many times where people have betrayed what our forefathers fought for. Around the world thousands upon thousands of people die in their own quest for such freedoms as we take for granted. This place we now occupy is the foundation of our way of life. Let us make sure that our actions help grow that flower of democracy and not destroy it.

When we were elected, we swore an oath to preserve and protect. May God help us to achieve this lofty goal of democracy. And once again, the words are "freedom" and "democracy."

I would now touch on a subject that is near and dear to me. It is

of course agriculture. Saskatchewan has almost half of all of Canada's cropland. For livestock, we are second only to Alberta. One of the most important needs to sustain human life is food. As the world population grows and grows, food is becoming more and more in demand. We as government must protect this renewable resource. There are global forces that would do almost anything, legal or otherwise, to take control of the food chain. We must be very diligent to protect our agriculture.

Agriculture is also huge in the sequestration of carbon. Between our crops, grasslands, forests, Saskatchewan sequesters more carbon than we produce. Taking that into consideration, the federal government should be paying us, not taxing us.

We do not just have agriculture. We have the world's largest deposit of potash and the three largest potash mines in the world. Saskatchewan has almost 40 per cent of the world's uranium. Lithium is now on our future. Companies looked at Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Montana, North Dakota to set up for lithium processing, and they chose Saskatchewan.

But there's more. There are 31 what I know of rare earth minerals, and I can't even pronounce some of the names, but the one I know is lithium. Saskatchewan has an amazing 23 of them. The future is ours with the proper stewardship.

A former premier once referred to Saskatchewan as a wee province. That is the saddest statement ever made by a premier of this province. I have served four years in opposition. I was there when Eldon Lautermilch said it was impossible to grow this province. He also said, as people left our province, and I quote, "that leaves more for the rest of us."

The Saskatchewan Party became government in November of 2007 and started — there we go — a complete paradigm shift. We are no longer the wee province. We are no longer the have-not province. We can now stand proud and say we are from the new Saskatchewan.

With the Saskatchewan Party government, we now do things that were thought impossible. We now have STARS [Shock Trauma Air Rescue Service]. We now have a children's hospital. We now build schools instead of closing them. We now build hospitals instead of closing them. We now build roads. I am very proud to have been part of the team that made these key moves to make our province a leader in the Canadian economy.

Mr. Speaker, I may say stepping down is bittersweet. I won't miss the 10:30-in-the-evening committee meetings. I will miss the friendships I have made. I will miss the planning and building of our province to be a player in both our Canadian economy and the world economy.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will end with the words of Michael W. Smith's song: "pray for me and I will pray for you." God bless Saskatchewan. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Carrot River Valley.

Mr. Bradshaw: — Well thank you, Mr. Speaker. And if you'll indulge me for just a moment. "And now the end is near, and so I face the final curtain."

Mr. Speaker, it's been a blast. And you know, I have so many thank yous to give. Obviously I'm going to start out . . . You can't do this with . . . You can't do this alone. You need to have your family behind you, and my family certainly has been behind me in doing this for the past 17 years.

I also have to thank my constituency assistant. Shelley's been there for 24 years, Mr. Speaker. That's a long time to be a constituency assistant. Cindy's been there for 14 years. And how they have managed to put up with me for that long, I don't know.

And I want to thank all of the people in the building because it's been absolutely amazing. All the staff in the building has been so great.

I also want to throw a big thank you out to Angela Currie. Now Angela Currie was my chief of staff when I was Minister of Highways, and now she's chief of staff in our caucus office, and she has done a great job in both of those positions. I don't know what we would do without her, Mr. Speaker.

And I've also been very privileged, very privileged to work with a great caucus. We've become friends, actually basically family. And I'm certainly going to miss them. And for some reason, I think they'll miss me, not for my good looks and charm, and not even for my charismatic talent, but for the butter tarts and brownies. But be assured, Mr. Speaker, I'll show up every now and then to feed the vultures.

One person that'll be happy to see me gone is brother Warren, Warren Kaeding. He'll now have his own identity and won't have to continue to answer to Mr. Bradshaw or I won't have to answer to Mr. Kaeding, one way or the other.

Our Premier and our previous premier are great leaders with a vision of how to move this province forward. And I'd be remiss if I didn't mention our Finance minister. Donna has done an absolute masterful job of putting together budgets in these trying times as we . . . [inaudible] . . . the deplorable infrastructure the NDP left us with in the now growing province.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very happy to represent — and I know some people might disagree with me — the best constituency in the province. You know, we've got great farm land and farmers. We've got fantastic forestry operations, hunting, fishing, golf courses, regional parks, best snowmobile trails in all of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, and I've talked about this before, the reason that I got involved in politics. And this goes back, you know, a number of years ago obviously. And when I first brought it up to my wife, she said to me, well you know, why would you want to do this? And I said because Morgan was already in university, Gina was in, I think, grade 11, and I said, you know, I want to see our kids working in this great . . . in this province.

And Terry said to me, she said, well you know, you've got a good business. What's the remuneration? And I said, I have no idea. Then she said, you're going to apply for a job and you have no idea what the remuneration is? And I can still remember my exact words. I said, it's the right thing to do.

And now we have our daughter Gina who's principal at Milestone. So she's working in the province.

We have my son Morgan who's here today, and he's working for the SHA [Saskatchewan Health Authority]. And he's worked in this building. A lot of people know Morgan. And I've got to bring up too — and I did do a member's statement on it the other day — Morgan ran the Boston Marathon. And you don't just go into that easily. You have to, you actually have to qualify for it. And he did very well in the Boston Marathon. I can't remember the exact numbers. But he also ran the Queen City Marathon this past weekend, and he was fourth in the Queen City Marathon. So he did a great job, great job. And you know, he's become quite the kid. I call him my little boy. He's not actually that little anymore but he does have the same haircut I do.

You know, being an MLA requires a lot of time. We all know this and we guarantee that many hours and weekends are put in on both sides of the Chamber, as we're all there to do what we believe is the best for our constituents. Rural is even different than urban because everyone there knows their MLA. It doesn't matter if it's in a grocery store, cafe, or even a funeral, people want to get your ear on something.

[16:00]

Now we have a certain reporter who seems to believe that if we are not in session all we do is go to the lake, put our feet up, and take it easy. I can say to that reporter, I personally spend more time looking through the windshield of my car every week than he does writing his regurgitated editorials. All MLAs have a duty to be in touch with the people who we serve, whether in session or not. Well so much for that little rant.

Since 2007, Carrot River Valley has seen many improvements. We have a thriving forest industry, and there have been many improvements to our highway system to accommodate that. I would like to mention to the minister there is still a little bit more to do; the last piece of Highway 55 needs to be completed to the Manitoba border. With Churchill starting up, we're going to have to have a highway there. Just thought I'd throw that in while I was speaking.

We have new schools in both Hudson Bay and Carrot River. So we're not closing schools, we're building them. Now, Mr. Speaker, I won't be here next session to talk about the Carrot River Wildcats, but I will certainly let the person who replaces me know what they're doing, and I might even write a member statement or two for them.

You know, you talk about things that have happened in Carrot River Valley. We have a new special care home in Tisdale. Now the last time a special care home was built in the Carrot River Valley constituency was back in the Grant Devine days. That's how we are improving infrastructure within this province. And it's not just in Carrot River Valley, it's all over the province.

And you think of the other things that are happening in all of our rural communities, and you know, we got the infrastructure that we've put money into, the water works in, well basically pretty well every town in my constituency. We've got landfills that this government has put money out to. We have revenue sharing to help those municipal properties or the municipalities and the towns. You know, that was something that was never had before. Lift stations. All of these things cost money, but this was because we had such an infrastructure deficit.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I'll tell you one thing I've noticed especially in the Carrot River Valley constituency — all of the new power poles going up. There's new power poles all over the place. I've never seen so many new power poles going up. You know, the power poles were in such a deplorable shape that one day in my former life I was out spraying and got a little close to a power line. You know, I hit that power line, but luckily, luckily the power poles were so weak that I took down four power poles and kept right on flying. I wouldn't want to suggest to do that now, not with those new power poles. That could be hard on things, especially me.

Saskatchewan has moved forward, Mr. Speaker. We are no longer the wee province. We are a “we” province, but not wee, e-e.

The NDP never believed we could have STARS, a children's hospital. They closed schools, closed hospitals, fired teachers and nurses. We've got new hospitals going up in Prince Albert, Mr. Speaker, the Victoria Hospital, which is going to be a godsend for us people in northeastern Saskatchewan.

We have seen so many new infrastructure projects it just boggles your mind, so many new infrastructures going on in this province. And we're a growing province, basically 250,000 more people in this province than when I was first elected. People are in this province. Our children are staying in this province and working, and that's what we want to see. And that is what we need.

And not only that, Mr. Speaker. I can tell you right now if the federal government would just get out of our way, we'd be the richest province in all of Canada, bar none. This is the greatest province in Canada, and I wouldn't want to live anywhere else. I am so proud, so proud of what has been accomplished in the last 17 years, and I look forward to what's on the horizon.

God bless Saskatchewan. And with that, thank you. It's been a privilege.

The Speaker: — I recognize the member from Yorkton.

An Hon. Member: — Greg, stand up.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — I am standing. Mr. Speaker, it's an honour to join in the addresses here today of our retiring members. And I'll admit upfront, it's probably, probably the most difficult speech I'll ever give. You know, so many feelings and sentiments have been reflected by so many other members on the floor here this afternoon and previously yesterday. And you know, a lot of them bear repeating and a lot of them will be my own that I'll share this afternoon.

Of course, I acknowledged my family initially in introductions, but I have to acknowledge them again. We don't do this job alone. It's been said time and time again. That bears repeating time and time again. First and foremost, my wife of 38 years, girlfriend for 44, Leone, is in the Assembly this afternoon. And it's just been such a blessing to have her by my side, supportive every step of the way.

The rest of our family's here, but of course my mom, Pat, is in the Assembly as well. She currently lives in Regina, but been a

stalwart advocate and support all of my life. She often reflects on not believing I would live past 18, seriously, about some of the stuff that she knew about my youth and childhood. But I'm still here, Mom. And that's a lot to do with the upbringing and her prayers.

My daughter's Katelin, her husband, Mark, are in the Assembly this afternoon. And she's my eldest. And you know, I can say this about both of my son-in-laws: I couldn't have picked better partners for my daughters. They are just such a great fit to the family. They're friends of mine. We do a lot of stuff together. We have a lot of similar interests. I'm just so blessed by them.

Mark and Katelin's daughter Malaya is here this afternoon. Raya, the older granddaughter, wasn't able to attend. But you know, just so blessed by them in our lives as well.

Younger daughter, Rayanne, is here. And you know, just an amazing young lady, very talented in so many ways. Both of them are — her husband, Austin, as well. I couldn't have picked a better spouse or partner for my daughter. And couldn't have picked better parents for our grandchildren.

Wynn, Otto and Crew were just a total blessing in our lives. We spend an awful lot of time with them. Leone, as many will know, calls herself “Grandma Daycare” or you know, many different things, but she is just an amazing grandma and an amazing mom, besides being an amazing spouse. And I'm just so blessed to have them all in my life.

We have a couple other special guests. My sister-in-law Teri Wiwchar. She recently retired from the SHA. She's moved to Yorkton to help look after her mom, who we just recently lost here at 98-and-a-half years of age. And she was just an amazing woman as well and such a big impact on my life. And I introduced her in the opening segment.

Kelly Harris. I call her our own Ronald McDonald House in Saskatoon. When our son Brayden was going through his treatment, you know, we were blessed enough not to have to go to Ronald McDonald House. We had her home that she made open up to us. We were able to spend a lot of time there. So we're just so blessed to have Kelly here. And she's been a cheerleader through my whole career. She's worked in government, you know, virtually her whole life. And she's always been a great support as well. And I'm blessed to have her in attendance today.

Rachelle Sawatsky, my one constituency assistant, has been with me for 10 years. She wasn't able to attend. Her and her husband Kevin are away. But I mentioned Lauretta is in the Assembly and she spent, you know, coming on 29 years as a constituency assistant. And I can honestly say that I could never have done the 17 years I have in this place and in the job without her friendship, her support, quite often her correction. She's my conscience, and she's kept me safe from some mistakes I could have walked into that I didn't need to. Just a very, a very solid person, a very good friend.

Of course, a few have mentioned as well Ang Currie, our chief of staff in the caucus office and her staff. Troy, Kim, Mykola, Cienne, Marita, and Shelby are just great people to work with every day. So I'm so going to miss them when I leave this place and probably won't return too often, but I'm going to miss

working with them as well.

Former Premier Wall, I've got to give him a lot of credit. His strong servant leadership, his mentorship, is a lot to do with why I'm here today and maybe some of the man I am as well.

My friend, Pastor Fred Hill, chaplain Fred Hill in the west gallery. This man gives so much of himself to this Assembly for the members, the constituency assistants, the staff members, and so much in the community. He's been serving at a volunteer position, yet full-time every day in this Assembly virtually that we're here, he's up there, you know, supporting us, all members. He's not partisan. He supports all members in this Assembly and we're so blessed to have Fred here.

And many that have gone before that have had a big impact on my life: former Speaker Don Toth was a great mentor, kind of a father figure; Rich and Joanne Lepp from the Saskatchewan House of Prayer, that spent a lot of time in this Assembly as well. Former member — passed away a number of years ago — Serge LeClerc had a big impact on me, a lot of his experience and a lot of his wisdom that he'd gleaned over the years. And so many that are no longer here today.

I think — I did a rough count — since I've entered this Assembly for the first time in 2007 I believe I've lost about eight colleagues. I think we've had about eight flags draped on desks. And it's just . . . it's a hard thing to think about those that we've lost.

Before I move on too far, my Wednesday morning crew. It's a group that I've been involved with in this Assembly. You know, a lot of different members and community members and people of all types, staff members will gather in an office, usually mine, and share a time of fellowship and reflection and focusing on what's most important. It's just been such a support for me and I know a support for others, and I'll miss the regular interactions with that group as well. The retiring colleagues, there's probably not enough time for me to mention all, but I'll probably glean over a few of them in the course of my statement.

But I can just honestly say that I think I'm taking a little bit of every one of these members with me and those that are no longer here. Much more than friends, they are family. And I think we've heard it before. I mean this place can be a bit of a war zone. I think a lot of people recognize that, and truly you do go to war some days. It is a battle, a political battle, but it's a battle. And I can honestly say there's no other group of men and women that I'd rather walk into a battle with than these people on this side of the House, you know, even some that let you down sometimes.

I'm going to pick on Todd Goudy. I lovingly call him the letdown man, but I'll tell you something. If it's not a big deal he might let you down from time to time, but when your back is truly against the wall and you need somebody to back you, that man is always in my corner. And I know he's always there. You know, it's someone I pick on a little bit too much.

I'm going to pick on Dana Skoropad with his bright suits and all the rest, one of our newest members. And you know, I like to have fun around with some of the things that I've been through and use it as a bit of an example. And as the Whip I've got to approve leaves and all the rest. But I remember a situation not

too long ago. Dana called me up, says, "You know what, Greg? I'm not feeling well. I'm going to have to take the day off. I got the flu." I said, "You know what, Dana? I understand. You know, when you're sick, you don't want to spend the day at work. You know, when I had cancer — I went through treatment in 2017 — I took four days off too." So we gave him the day. We gave him the day.

I'll pick on a few as we go through here. The member from Kindersley isn't here.

Some Hon. Members: — He's here.

Mr. Ottenbreit: — Oh, Ken. Oh, he moved. Just wait. We're going to get to Ken in a while, I think.

But in all seriousness, before I move along to any more joking, Premier Moe, Scott Moe. I appreciate his strong, steadfast leadership in some of the most difficult times this province has ever faced. And I won't go into the details, but I was talking to Premier Wall and he said, you know what? I have so much respect for what Scott's had to go through. Like there's been three significant, huge things that I never had to go through. And the way Scott's handled them, I think it bears recognition. You know, I've disagreed with Scott multiple times, but I've always known . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Just wait. I'm not always right, but I can honestly say no matter whatever happened, I always knew that that man did the best, absolute best any leader could possibly have done with the information and everything at hand.

[16:15]

And although none of us will claim to be perfect, I leave this building knowing I have a friend in the Premier, and I truly respect his leadership and his strong, steadfast stance that he takes.

When I started thinking about this retirement speech . . . And again bouncing back to Dana, he says, when are you writing your speech? I said, I started in 2005. And I truly did. When I got into this game I was really apprehensive to get into politics. And I had a good long talk with my wife, and I was not sure if I wanted to do this. She says, you know what? Run for nomination; if you win, great. If you win the election, great, but set a goal. And back then, between the two of us we decided four terms would be maximum, which was kind of a pipe dream in Yorkton, kind of the red square and was held by the NDP for a long, long time.

But we set that goal, and I stuck to that goal. In 2020 she really questioned my sanity in all sincerity after going through cancer and going through treatment and surgery and more treatment that first year and then follow-up for the remaining few years. We're coming into the 2020 election, and she wondered, what the heck was I doing? She really felt that the stress and the pace of this job contributed somewhat to my illness. I'm not sure, maybe it did.

But I just knew I had to continue one more term. I wasn't sure that our hospital was going to get over the finish line and I'm very sure now. We're in the planning stages. We've gotten another commitment in this last budget of another million dollars for planning and scoping. There's a confidence that, you know, we're behind Weyburn and Prince Albert, and I'll look forward

to that happening. So I can comfortably go into my retirement from this place knowing that that's going to happen, and the next MLA can cut the ribbon on that facility.

I made that decision, like I said, a long time ago. But when doing an outline for this speech, I bounced back through an interview I did about a year ago with Calvin Daniels — definitely not a supporter but a very fair reporter. And the questions he asked me, he says, “Greg, what’s your greatest accomplishment? What is it you’re most proud of? And what’s your biggest screw-up?”

And I said, that’s a difficult question. Like accomplishments, I’ll have to go through some of the things I’ve been involved with locally. I’ve served on many positions as legislative secretaries. I’ve served as a Chair of the Human Services committee, Deputy Whip, Whip, minister of Rural and Remote Health. I think I was one of the longest-serving Health ministers we had, about five years. And then I served in Highways, Water Security. And I served from ’14 to I guess ’20, ’21 as a minister of Ukraine relations.

So I kind of had to go through a bit of a list there. And you know, it’s interesting that this . . . I come from business, where you can make a decision and move ahead and just keep moving. You might not have the right decision, but you can alter course and keep going. Here you really have to look back. And thank God that we have hindsight to look back and see what we’ve kind of been involved with or accomplished.

So I started going through that list. And you know, quite quickly I’ll go through it. But locally, you know, the water treatment plant. Flood mitigation with the city. Increased revenue sharing. Improved infrastructure in and around Yorkton, including the 52A truck reliever route. Urban connector improvements on York Road, along with past and future improvements on Grain Millers Drive. Airport improvements. Health care facility improvements, including a primary health clinic and a new hospital in the planning. Affordable housing. Education facilities, including the Suncrest College Trades & Technology Centre. Yorkton Regional High School, \$20 million renovation. Expanded human services.

In the four different legislative secretary roles I’ve held: in Social Services with a woman I love and respect, Donna Harpauer, community-based organizations initiatives. A lot of great work I did along with her in recognizing those CBOs [community-based organization] and really giving them some of the recognition and increased funding that they were asking for back then.

In Environment I served with a couple different Environment ministers, including I think Nancy Heppner, who was sitting around here at some point. Dustin Duncan, another great friend. The multiple material recycling plan was something, the initial plan I put together as a legislative secretary. Served under Premier Wall. Vulnerable youth initiatives.

And also Premier Wall, a bit of a fun one: the collector car and Saskatchewan Roughriders commemorative licence plates. I remember the NDP raising issue at the time about what did this cost us? When I did my expenses, between my own travel and the paper I wrote it on, and Lauretta in my office did a lot of the artwork on her computer, it cost 1,200 bucks. So I think that was pretty good. Nothing to see here; move along. Move along.

As the legislative Committee on Human Services Chair and Deputy Whip and Government Whip, I won’t go through detail but a lot of different things we did there. Some of the best work I think, I was able to be involved with through the Ministry of Health, minister responsible for rural and remote, Seniors, EMS [emergency medical services], etc. We expanded training and . . . [inaudible] . . . in rural areas, increased the number of professionals, including doctors and nurses in our health care system.

Many facility openings I was involved with, including about a dozen long-term care and integrated facilities: Saskatchewan Hospital North Battleford from announcement to opening, the Pattison Children’s Hospital from sand-turning to opening. That was one of my proudest moments. And the reason for that is I remember snapping a picture and sending it off to Leone.

And what she sent back, it just, it really broke me, because where we built that hospital was a parkade. We pulled the parkade out, and where we were doing the sand-turning, I was talking to . . . Dustin was there and Brad Wall was there. And I looked up to the third floor. Peds 3000 is where we spent the better part of two years with our son, Brayden. And he would look down from there and look at that very parkade and call it his car collection. Because if you looked at it, it looked like a matchbox set or whatever you’d open up with a bunch of toy cars.

And when Leone sent that message back to me and says, “Oh awesome. You’re building a hospital to help kids just like Brayden right where his car collection was,” that struck me. And I was so proud. And I don’t know if there’s anything I’m involved with that makes me more proud from this job, but that was something that just really, really hit me.

I had a lot of friends in the EMS areas. We built a lot of good relationships. We started a really renewed focus on EMS, and I believe that’s continued today. Previously, and they would even share with me that, you know, we used to . . . you know, although there’s a bit of a struggle from time to time, they said, “Greg, you know what? You’ve never seen ambulances in front of this building. Under those guys, there was.” So that’s something I take a little bit of satisfaction in. I was able, as the minister of Rural Health, to renew the 10-year contract with STARS and approve the renewal of the STARS helicopter fleet.

Minister of Highways and Infrastructure. Although the members opposite don’t like it, the Regina bypass. I was able to be the minister opening that bypass, along with the Premier and other members. I think, to this day, the fire departments along No. 1 Highway have not used their jaws of life since that highway’s been opened.

And all the members . . . I think the member for University talked about, “I’ve looked and there’s no cars driving.” You better look a little bit closer, because the traffic counts on that road are second almost to none. It’s an amazing amount of traffic going on that road. It flows traffic really well, so it just doesn’t look like a lot visually. Look at the numbers. Amazing. And you know, to look at what that’s contributed to our economy is something that really has to be mentioned. And again, the safety is something that really bears mentioning.

I’ve been involved in numerous twinning and passing lane

projects, including Highway 16 passing lanes from Clavet to Manitoba. I've increased, back when I was minister, we increased the community airport partnership program. Significant investment and focus on northern airports. Approval of the Wollaston Lake road. Significant investments in five provincial parks and roads leading to them. And there's a bunch of other stuff. Minister of Water Security Agency. I was able to kick off the Lake Diefenbaker irrigation project.

Minister Responsible for Saskatchewan-Ukraine Relations. I continued the recognition of our Ukrainian heritage and history, focused on Holodomor remembrance, fostered relationships with Ukraine through ambassadors, especially Andriy Shevchenko.

And then, you know, I got to the point, like screw-ups. What could I point to as a screw-up? And I mean, we all have some . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Lori, don't. So I honestly had to ask . . . Ken, your time's coming. I had to ask my constituency assistants. They were both in the office. I said, Rachelle, like what? She says, no, I really honestly can't think of anything I would call a screw-up.

And then I asked Lauretta, and she pointed out a few things that maybe I could work on, but nothing directly related to this job. She did say honestly my biggest issue is I take responsibility for things I don't need to, I shouldn't. And I try to fix everything. And I guess that's my people-pleaser, fixer-type personality, but I try and help where I can.

But I did point out to Calvin the one thing that I would probably be pointed at as being my biggest shortfall — you know, I think members opposite, maybe members of the media, those that oppose my views maybe — but it's a disappointment but not in myself. In so many people in society. Others' response to my personal philosophy or faith. It's been kind of ridiculous, some things. I don't really take offence in them attacking me. I mean the good Lord tells us we're going to face criticism. But I wouldn't change a thing or I wouldn't compromise.

You know, I found in here we're expected to respect others' views, and I believe largely I have been able to, even in some of my controversial roles. However my disappointment is the lack of, total lack of reciprocation from those not sharing our same views. I've always stood for life, and I don't know why it surprises anybody. I've witnessed first-hand the impacts of decisions made by my friends many years ago, especially as a teenager, the lasting effects on those people today — emotional, physical, mental, and spiritual. It's devastating. People need to know fully the decisions they're making and what the impacts are.

One thing that really solidified my view of the intrinsic value of life is watching a three-year-old fight for his life until he became six years old. That made me really see the value of life. And, Mr. Speaker, I don't know why people would question it. You look at what my wife and I stand for, what we do every day through Brayden Ottenbreit Close Cuts for Cancer. We try and improve the lives of people going through cancer. We try and help save the lives of people going through cancer. We don't always get it right. We don't always make, you know, the impacts we want, but you keep working. You keep working for life. We strive to help lives.

Civil Air Search and Rescue Association. It's something I've been involved with for over 30 years as a search pilot and something I'm proud to do, and I'll probably take a little bit more time doing that in the months and years to come. And although the unofficial motto is "Support CASARA; get lost," the official motto is "So others may live." Live.

I don't know why anybody would be surprised by my stand, my philosophies, or my beliefs. Anything less than my beliefs, to me, if I had a wavering view it'd be nothing more than an opinion. And what's an opinion worth today?

And you know, Mr. Speaker, I just added this this morning. My three youngest grandkids, they came last night and they were excited to see me. They came to the condo. And Crew, he was standing on his feet asleep, so I put him and he . . . somebody had to draw the short straw and sleep with stinky grandpa. So he wasn't awake, couldn't defend himself. He's with grandpa.

And I think I fell asleep about 11 and I woke up about 2, and I just listened to him lay there and breathe. And, Mr. Speaker, if that doesn't make you see the value of life and just appreciate it, appreciate the blessings that we all have. But for me to listen to Crew breathe for probably two or three hours is like, wow, I am so blessed to have these people in my life, to have these kids, grandkids, wife, family members in my life. Although I seem to take it for granted I think time to time, I'll never take that for granted.

And I found over the years it's interesting some of the kind of feedback I get from people. A lot of people seem to like me and I really appreciate that. However I've been told by people fairly close that are very honest with me: you know, I kind of like you but I don't really like your openness about your Christian faith. And I'll say to them, "You know what? You don't get one without the other. Because honestly the me before I really had a faith in Christ, you wouldn't like. I wouldn't be in this place, and I don't think you would have the same view or you wouldn't like me so much." So again that's something I'll never back away from, my philosophies or my faith.

I know I've fallen short at times and the critics love to pile on us, you know, the last couple of days. Oh you know, a kind of hair on fire on Twitter and the trolls go nuts. Pile on all you want. That's okay. I kind of love that. I've developed a bit of a thick skin. That's kind of strangely satisfying to see them lose their minds and their control. But I've never said I was perfect. I'm far from it, but I do believe in and follow the one who was. There's only been one.

Actually kind of thinking about that, back in 2005 I think it was, my wife, Leone, challenged me — you know, politics can be quite a different game — and challenged me not to change. Probably maybe a couple years after being elected, she says, well you know, you could just change a little bit.

You know, some of the lessons I've learned over the years . . . I told my wife this story, oh, probably 15 years ago, and she actually made something for me to sit on my desk. It's a story of four balls. In the collection there's . . . three are glass, crystal, and one's rubber. And the way the story goes, the three are faith, family, and friends. The glass ones. The rubber one's work. And you've got to protect your faith, your family, and your friends

with all you have. Work is important but it'll always bounce back. She made that example and I've had that sitting on my desk in my office in Yorkton and here ever since I've been in this building, and I really do appreciate that reminder every day.

One thing I've come to realize . . . And I've had this conversation with different friends of mine. They're quite socialist and that's fine. I respect their views. But I say, you know, there's a difference between socialism and social conscience. You can have social conscience, and I believe this party, this group does. You have to have a strong economy to invest in the things that people expect, you know, all the different things we talk about, we've talked about in our budget. You can't fund that without a strong economy. You can have a social conscience.

But socialism and expecting the government to pay for everything does not support that. It doesn't support that reality. So I always strive to try and recognize that, what's socialism and what's social conscience. And I truly believe this party, these people have a strong social conscience looking out for the better of the people of this province.

Ideals and ideology. You know, it's great to have ideals and ideology, and I've got my own and you shoot for the moon. And the good thing is you might achieve a whole bunch of good stuff on the way to that ideal, but reality is you won't achieve it. So you've got to plan in ideals. You've got to have your ideology and have grand plans, but you have to operate in reality. And so often I think, you know, not to pick on the members opposite, but it's quite often they can't differentiate between ideology, ideals, and what might be achievable.

[16:30]

I've always strived to set an example even when I'm not seen. And again I said I always don't get it right; however I have always been trying to be accountable to someone higher and recognize a path back. And one thing I've always tried to keep in mind, I kind of picture my little six-year-old guy. He can see me no matter what I'm doing, saying, thinking, you know, talking about, and I try and always set an example for a six-year-old. But I do fall short from time to time.

And you know, I'd be kidding myself if I didn't say there have been times, especially over the last four years, I've been disappointed from time to time. The ideal career path I would have had would have been in cabinet earlier, in cabinet later, you know, exit and then kind of pick my route. And you know, when I got given the position of Whip, I wasn't really excited about it. But I had a lot of good friends around me — Todd and Marv Friesen and some others. You know, they really were friends and they kind of talked me through some of my funk.

But you know what, Mr. Speaker? And I've shared this with the Premier as well, that God's plan is so much better than my plan. And I thank the Premier for, you know, whether he knew it or not, he fulfilled God's plan for me. I needed to be in the Whip's office when I was for this part of my career. It's been a perfect path for me. And again I just want to thank you, Scott, Premier Moe, for making I know a difficult decision — any time you do when it's cabinet shuffles and all of these leadership changes — and putting me right where I needed to be. Thank you very much.

In some of the most difficult times in my life, the Lord has always looked after me and brought me through. Many situations through my career here I saw no way through, especially in some difficult situations, media scrums, and committee meetings. But I've always found if I really asked God for help, if I really relied on him he gave me guidance. He gave me a way out, a way through every single time. I'm so thankful for God's involvement in my life.

I don't want to be too, too much longer, Mr. Speaker, but there's a few things. And I'll be honest, I've got a few documents here, have been sitting on my desk for 16 years that I've wanted to put on record. I'm not going to read two of them at length. I'd encourage people to look at them on their own.

Back in 1984 — no, just a minute, yeah 1984 — the Lieutenant Governor at the prayer breakfast in Kipling, Saskatchewan went at length about talking about Canada and the province, the Constitution, what our country is founded on. And he continually refers to biblical principles: Psalm 72, the Dominion of Canada, from sea to sea. It just goes on. So I'd encourage people to look at that. I'm not going to read it into record just in light of time.

Another document, and I note that Todd Goudy referred to it in one of his speeches a while ago. It goes to 1953, Queen Elizabeth's coronation. And I mean it's a strong biblical reference to the whole event, but the thing I like is the prayer that we essentially read in the legislature was read there:

Present us, O Lord, in all our doings with thy most gracious favour and further us with thy continual help, that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy name, and finally by thy mercy obtain everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Another thing that really struck me as interesting. It goes back to 1980, and this is for all parties. This is the province of Saskatchewan "Proclamation to All Citizens of Saskatchewan Who Have Faith in Their God Almighty as Creator and Sustainer of Life." And this is a committee made up of Conservatives, New Democrats, Liberals:

We the Members of the Interfaith Committee charged with calling you to . . . [remember] the manifold blessings that have enriched the lives of all who dwell in this wondrous land:

Call upon you to give praise and honor that under divine providence our dwelling place is in a land of such great fortune. A land of fruitful plains and mighty waters; with precious riches of earth and sky, of riches beneath the earth; for a land of which there is bread without scarceness.

We give praise to the boundless blessings of dew and sunshine, snow and rain in their season. For all this and the opportunities thus . . . [I don't know that word] to us we bless and magnify Thy Holy Name.

And we pray Thee to grant us grace so to sanctify Thee in our heritage that men may know that Thou art our God; a God who givest us the sense of stewardship of Thy bounty; moving us to gratitude of all Thy gifts so freely bestowed upon us. Let us not fail to remember that unto whomsoever

much is given, of them much is also required.

We remember with grateful and loving pride the valiant pioneers who braved the hardship of the founding years of life of this Province, their faith in thee and in the future of this land where freedom abounds.

To us who received the torch they lighted, may we not abuse the liberties they so dearly won using them as license for wilfulness and selfishness and greed, but may we live, that the heritage for which we give thanks at this time of celebration may be handed on unimpaired and enriched to those who come after us.

This proclamation and invitation to observe this anniversary we address to the fellowship of faith throughout the province of Saskatchewan, and call upon one and all to lead and remind the people of such acts and observances as will make memorable and worthy this historic monument in history.

Interfaith Committee of Saskatchewan, 75th anniversary, January 1980.

One other document I want to read into record, I don't know if it's been read into record since it was read in 1912. The dedication prayer of the cornerstone laid of the Legislative Building:

Almighty God who rules over the kingdoms of this world and dost order them accordingly to thy good pleasure, we humbly pray be with us this day and give thy blessings. Thou has said unless the Lord built the house, they labour in vain that built it, except the Lord keep the city, he watches in vain who keeps it. Be therefore O Lord our protector and guide us in all things.

In the name of the blessed trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, we lay in this place this cornerstone to thy glory, and to the public we will dedicate the structure which is here being erected. We pray that during the coming years thy wisdom and thy justice may dwell within it and from its halls thy divine spirit may spread over the province through the ministry of men who shall come whether under thy mandate, O God of thy nations, to rule thy people.

Thou hast said by me king's reign and lawmaker's decree just things. The elect of the people become the ministers of thy power for the welfare of the people. Within this building rulers will have their vote. Be thou ever ready we pray to shed upon them, governor, councillors, and elected officers, thy divine light that they may know their responsibility and that they may use their power not for the interest of self but rather for the interest of the people, that the people may dwell in peace.

So, Mr. Speaker, I just encourage all members of this Assembly, kind of reflect on the words, reflect on what this place is founded on, what this country is founded on, and let's not stray far from it.

And as I close I just want to . . . You know, this is a very combative place. There's a lot of friction that happens in this

place. And I know I've faulted people and I've been faulted by people. So I think it's incumbent upon me to forgive those who have faulted me. Anybody that I've faulted, that have faulted me, you're truly forgiven. You know, there's people in the public, and I might have been faulted by members of the opposition, but I give unequivocal forgiveness. And I also ask that those that I've faulted, forgive me as well.

Considering who I'm sure is going to return, and some of the new candidates coming, I know this province will be in good hands. And I'll be cheering you on. God bless you all, and God bless this province.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Crown Investments Corporation.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I rise for the final time as the member for Weyburn-Big Muddy. And I do so with nothing but a heart full of love and gratitude. Mr. Speaker, these past 18 years have been and will be among the greatest honours I will ever experience, to be a member of this Assembly and of this government.

We have done so much together, imperfect as we have been and most assuredly as imperfect as I have been. But, Mr. Speaker, I won't devote my remaining moments in this Chamber to recount projects that we have built, though there have been many including in my constituency, nor the policies that we have pursued, though they have been significant. No, Mr. Speaker, projects and policies and plans will have to wait until another day.

This afternoon I'm going to devote this time on the people — the people I worked for, the people I worked with, and the people I love the most. In doing so, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to name some individuals. That's right, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to name names. But of course the danger in that is I'm going to forget someone or I'm going to leave someone out. The error is mine, not theirs.

Mr. Speaker, in 2006 the good people of Weyburn-Big Muddy took a chance on a 26-year-old — for lack of a better word — kid who had a lot to learn about them and even more to learn about himself. I will always be grateful to the constituents for that. I cannot thank them enough. They have rooted for me. They have encouraged me and confided in me. And, Mr. Speaker, I've always felt that even those who may have been against me, politically speaking, I've always felt that they were pulling for me. I think that they knew if I did well, that the constituency would as well.

Mr. Speaker, I've always thought that as the people I represent gave me their support, that I would in return always do my best, work my hardest, and hopefully in a way that reflected the dignity in which they live their lives day in and day out, and that at the end of it they would see the fruit of our labour and consider it a fair trade.

Mr. Speaker, the people of Weyburn-Big Muddy have held up their end of the bargain. I hope they think I have as well.

Mr. Speaker, along the way I was supported by the most incredible people, constituency executive members and campaign volunteers, all the way back to that by-election and that

first nomination in 2006 that preceded it, people like Marilyn and Garth, Earl and Karen. Folks from out West like Blair, Morris, and Mike, Dick and Herb; Murray, Chairman Murray; Dale and Davin and that entire family; Phil, Mike, Jeff, Pat, Rob, John, Brenda; Dan Cugnet, who's here today; and my most recent campaign manager for the last three elections, my aunt Danette. So many people who put up signs, knocked on doors, travelled through the constituency with me, who gave me their support. I know I'm missing a few, but thank you to them all.

Mr. Speaker, over the years we lost a couple of really important members of that team and I just want to say a few words about each of them.

First Ken Cugnet — it's a lot harder with Dan here — Kenney was a pillar of Weyburn, of the oil industry. And when I was just starting out he and Dale Mainil took me around to meet members of the business community and conferred upon me a bit of credibility that I didn't yet own.

Bill Giblett. Bill was a wonderful man from Bengough who served for many years as the reeve of the RM and countless community activities. He and his wife, Joyce, opened their home to me on more than one occasion. It seems that they always knew when I needed a rest or maybe just another cup of coffee, and they were always there for me.

Grant Brookes. Mr. Brookes was my geo-trig teacher in high school and despite that and despite my rather poor showing in his class, was one of my most enthusiastic supporters, always with a smile on his face.

And Ross Bobier. The Bobiers and the Traceys, my mother's family, go back at least three generations in Halbrite. I sure miss Ross's friendship, his encouragement, and all that he poured into my life.

To all of our friends back home, Ryan and Kim; Schmitt, Mark Schmidt, my oldest friend in the world. And to new friends, Kelly and Jeremy, Erin and Stu, Janelle and Marco and so many others, we're looking forward to hopefully having more time to connect and reconnect with old friends and new. So thank you all for your support over all these years.

To the people of Weyburn-Big Muddy, I just cannot begin to thank you enough.

So that's a bit about the people I got to work for, the people that I got to work with. I think many of you have heard me say that after a school trip to this building in about grade 2 or 3, I went home that night and I told my parents I knew where I was going to work someday. To say that this has been a dream only begins to describe it. This is such a special place to work.

And I was reminded of that today when I was on my way to work after dropping the boys off in school and crossing over the bridge and just taking a glimpse at the building amongst the trees and the flags that were waving and just realizing that it is as grand as it has ever been in my mind.

But, Mr. Speaker, it's the people who make it that way. From the cleaners to the cafeteria staff, everyone in legislative and member services, the parliamentary heritage program, the security staff.

The guys in IT [information technology] that are doing the audio and visual, thanks for showing my good side. To the Table Clerks and all who support you behind the scenes, Hansard.

[16:45]

The building management, Steve, Jeff, and Ralph. I want to thank Steve especially for helping me first overcome my dislike of asymmetrical office furniture, but especially for a gift that he gave today over the last 24 hours, and I also want to thank the member from Rosetown-Elrose.

You see, Mr. Speaker, earlier this spring session during an evening sitting when I wasn't sitting, I picked the kids up from home. And we came and sat in the gallery to watch a couple minutes of the proceedings and then we toured around the building. And going back to my office, I have a lot of artwork on the walls that my kids have done, and one really massive picture that hangs over the couch that the kids had painted a couple of years ago for me.

And Ephram was especially disappointed when we were leaving the building that while he was, I think, happy that it was in my office, he saw all this other beautiful — and some not so much — artwork hanging on the walls of this building. And he was to the point where he was in tears that his artwork wasn't hanging in the hallways of this building, Mr. Speaker. And I said, well maybe someday it will. And I told that story just yesterday to the member from Rosetown-Elrose and he went and talked to Steve yesterday. And that painting, for at least a day, is hanging outside my office out in the hallway. I can't thank my friend from Rosetown and Steve Bata enough for making that happen.

Mr. Speaker, to the librarians, and I even have an exclamation point. Thank you for all your help over the years. It is a toss-up whether my favourite room in this building is this room, the Chamber; or the library. Who am I kidding? It's the library.

To the public service, led by a tremendous individual in Raynelle Wilson, thank you, Mrs. Wilson, for all of your help. I have worked with and have been supported by the most remarkable women and men of the public service. I owe them my thanks and my appreciation, and there is far too many of them for me to name, but I thank them all for their help over the years.

Thank you to the government caucus staff, Ang and the team and John before her. In my view the caucus staff are the unsung heroes of this place. All of the ministerial staff. I am continually reminded of and inspired by the dedication and professionalism that each of you bring to this government.

I have been surrounded by great staff over the years, more chiefs of staff than I can count, and there's a few people that are here today — Bradshaw, Morgan Bradshaw, one of my chiefs. Dale Richardson, thanks for being here, Dale. Dale was a ministerial assistant in my office in Health.

I don't think he's here today but I know I do want to mention Graham Stewart. Graham door knocked for me in the 2007 election, and I didn't know Graham, but I knew him by reputation only for the fact that he had built a fence for the Cugnets, and that was all the seal of approval that I needed, Mr. Speaker.

Mitch Graw, who stands 10 feet tall in the most difficult of situations. And my current staff, Mr. Speaker: Dawn, Cindy, Linda, Robyn, and Mike. I regret that our time is going to be too short together.

And David Keogan. I was told by the Premier to call you Chicken Coop. David was actually a summer student of mine about . . . I think 10 years ago, almost to the day. Ten years ago. And I will say this, Mr. Speaker: I have been so impressed with these individuals that I get to work with, and in particular I have witnessed David in a room full of some of the most influential business people not just in this country but globally, and there are times where I think I should be staffing him, not the other way around, Mr. Speaker. I just appreciate all of these folks so much.

Mr. Speaker, to people in the Premier's office who have been such great support over the years, I especially want to point out Rhonda and Launa and Ruth before them. Oftentimes when I have a school trip, a school group that comes up from my constituency or if I know the teacher from a different constituency, I'll join them on that tour. Or maybe just constituents that come up. And after the tour ends, with the approval of the ladies in the Premier's office, I will have arranged for the tour to come in and see the cabinet room. And sometimes when he's not there, the Premier's office as well. You might not have known that.

But, Mr. Speaker, you cannot imagine the looks on these kids' faces when they get to . . . They think they've toured the building, and then you say, well come with me. And you get to show them into the cabinet room and sometimes the Premier's office, and how wide their eyes get, Mr. Speaker. So I want to thank Rhonda and Launa for that and for the lemon tea that they always make sure that they have on hand for me.

Mr. Speaker, people like Shannon Andrews and Julie Leggott, Reggie Dunlop, Drew Dwernychuk — another former chief of staff of mine; heck of a job, Brownie — Kathy Young.

And I do want to mention . . . I know the Minister for Advanced Education mentioned Joe Donlevy. I do want to say a couple of things about the late Joe Donlevy. Mr. Speaker, he was a character, and to this day I still don't know everything that Joe was trying to tell me. He would say things like, if you don't like the answer, change the question. Or if you had a project, you were working on something, he'd say, well just take that thing and bolt it onto the side. I'd be like, I don't know what that means, Joe.

But I think one of my favourites is one time Cam Baker, who was my chief of staff, and we were standing in the hallway and Joe was walking down the hallway and came to us. And we awkwardly made some small talk with Joe about some environment issue that Joe really had no interest in. And then Joe just, he looked at me and he said, "I just got off the phone. Weyburn's good." And walked away. And I thought, what does that even mean? Weyburn's good. Like, was Weyburn not good? Was there an issue that I didn't know about? Who, who would he be on the phone with from Weyburn that would know that Weyburn was good? And maybe I should know that person, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, there are so many people in a variety of roles inside

and outside the building who I have known and worked with really for 20 years, going back to when I was on the staff in the opposition office. We had a lot of fun in opposition, and I was just reminded the other day of a name that we had given ourselves in the research office, in that very small but mighty research office. We called ourselves the CACPAC [citizens against Conway political action committee].

It was led by T2 and there was people like me and Will Schenn and I think Bill Cooper was there at the time and James Saunders, who by the way, James applied for a job that I applied for and he actually got the job. And I'll just say this. We are better as a government for the fact that James got that job and I didn't get that first job.

But we called ourselves CACPAC. We named ourselves, unofficially named ourselves for a prominent social activist who at the time was running for Regina City Council. So if you're wondering where CACPAC comes from, we were the citizens against Conway political action committee. The more things change, the more things stay the same. But, Mr. Speaker, I'm grateful to be associated with people like James Saunders and Patrick Bundrock and everybody who has worked at the party office and the work that they do, Mr. Speaker.

And Reg Downs. I have been blessed to work alongside and to know Reg for the last 20 years. I think he's a genius. But I think the thing that I will remember the most is that often in big events, like when caucus gets together to kind of recap the budget and Reg will kind of give the final, like, here's the messaging around the budget. And you can tell by the way he gets choked up, the pride he has in what we're doing as a government but more especially the pride he has in this province. There is nothing that gets me choked up more than watching Reg Downs get choked up. And sorry if only staying for 18 years has been a disappointment, Reg.

And finally to Marcie Swedburg, the constituency assistant for 25 years who I've had the great pleasure of working with these past 18. The timing of my leaving is perfect as I have always said that I would not do this job without her, and as it turned out — and I mentioned yesterday when she was here — Marcie had already been planning to retire this year. She and her husband, Blair, have been a constant source of strength for me. She, and I hope she doesn't mind me saying this, is she's been like a second mother to me, always making sure that I'm up to speed on issues in the office, but more than that always making sure that I'm mindful of everything from highway conditions to the condition of my heart. I said it yesterday — I could not have asked to work for a better boss than you, Marcie. You have served the people of Weyburn-Big Muddy with great distinction.

And to my caucus colleagues of today and days past, people who don't live this life probably can't understand how close the bonds become. There is nothing like it. We are a family. We have shared great victories and witnessed each other's defeats. We have celebrated new life, the birth of children and grandchildren, weddings and graduations, Olympic medals. And we have borne each other's grief and we have mourned our very own. We have cried together, but boy have we laughed. And colleagues, for the times that I could be the cause of those laughs or to put a smile on your face, you have no idea how happy that has made me. I'm going to miss that.

I want to especially say . . . I want to thank my colleagues for their support over the years, in particular the member from Batoche; Indian Head-Milestone; Saskatoon Southeast; Saskatoon Willowgrove; you, Mr. Speaker; and the member from Humboldt. You recall, as I mentioned, Mr. Speaker, in 2006 before being elected I worked in the caucus office. To these members and those who were elected at that time, not only did you help get me elected, but you welcomed me with open arms. I never for a moment felt like a junior member, and that is something I will never forget.

I especially want to thank the member from Humboldt, the Deputy Premier. I was on a road trip staffing a group of MLAs that included her and we were going to Yorkton, and that's where I first met the member from Yorkton. And then we went to Tisdale and I met the member from Carrot River Valley. And the group was going on, I think, to Prince Albert, but the member from Humboldt and I decided we were coming back to Regina early.

And at that time there were some meetings in Weyburn, and I got a phone call — I think I was in Yorkton at the time — from a member of the executive back home, saying that I should come down and meet the executive. There were some people that thought I should look at the nomination. And I shared that with Amanda.

And then on the drive home, I got up the courage to share that with the member from Humboldt. Now my memory may be wrong. She could have been saying, well, that's a terrible idea. But I don't think that's what she said. I remember she . . . I remember the member from Humboldt saying, you should do it. And she doesn't know how much that encouragement meant to me.

Mr. Speaker, one of my favourite quotes is the Teddy Roosevelt quote called the man in the arena. I'm not going to read the whole thing, but in part it says, it's not the critic who counts; credit belongs to the man — and I would add parenthetically, the woman — who is actually in the arena. With the people I have served with, the member from Rosetown-Elrose, like an older, older brother to me . . . but he is like a brother. Mr. Speaker, my friend from Meadow Lake who I first met at a political youth convention — not just a youth convention, a youth policy convention — in university, Mr. Speaker.

But I will say this. In 2015, in the middle of session when I was the Health minister, members will recall that I needed to be away from the House for a little bit to take care of some personal matters. And when I came back, the member from Meadow Lake and Nancy Heppner were the first people to put their arms around me to welcome me back, Mr. Speaker. And I won't forget that.

My seatmate, people like the Justice minister, the member from Yorkton who always had my back when we were Health ministers together. My new and great friend, the member from Melfort, who I think saw in me a guy that knew how to play checkers but encouraged me to learn how to play chess. Really, all of you colleagues. I could not have hand-picked better people that I'd want to be in the arena with.

Mr. Speaker, finally to the two premiers that I've been honoured to work alongside and who I am blessed to call my friends, I want

to share, really quickly, just a couple of stories. One thing about Brad Wall. When I was the Environment minister, Brad first tasked me, and he said, you know, "I have three priorities." And I don't remember exactly what they were, but it was something like clean air and clean water and then a third one, and the third one might have been a water strategy or something like that. And so I would get working on some things and I would come, you know, we would bring something to . . . I'd bring something to cabinet. And he would get a little bit, I think, exasperated with me, because it would be something that I was working on that weren't necessarily those three things. And it was, I just wanted, like, clean air and clean water and a multi-material recycling program, and that was never on the "three list." And then the next time I would bring something to cabinet he'd say, I just wanted three things — clean air and clean water, and the third thing was something entirely brand new. I may be exaggerating. That may have been exaggerated.

Some Hon. Members: — No. No, it's not.

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — No, apparently it's not. But the three things has become a bit of a running theme around our offices, Mr. Speaker.

And both premiers, I will say, developed a pretty good habit of maybe surprising me with announcements. Maybe not necessarily that the thing was being announced, but just that it was being announced either on the radio or maybe in a speech, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: — We didn't know neither.

[17:00]

Hon. Mr. Duncan: — Yeah, but, Mr. Speaker, I'll always be indebted to Brad Wall for the faith that he placed in me, and to the Premier from Shellbrook for the trust that he gave me. I'm going to miss you all, colleagues, maybe even some of you across the way.

And finally, Mr. Speaker, to the people I love the most. Mr. Speaker, as much as I have been honoured to represent the people of Weyburn-Big Muddy over these past 18 years, I'm also mindful that in some ways I'm standing here representing my family.

I come from pretty inauspicious beginnings. Around the time of my first election, we had a Duncan family reunion where a couple of distant cousins told of going to Keith Hall, the large estate in Scotland where my great-grandfather was born. And upon doing some digging while there found out that James Duncan wasn't born in Keith Hall, but behind it where all the other servants lived. Mr. Speaker, 150 years ago Duncans were but humble servants, and I've tried to remain that way to this day. In some ways I have performed these duties with them in mind — aunts and uncles, cousins and in-laws, especially Amanda's late father, Allan, and her mother, Donna, one of my many, many prayer warriors.

And my grandparents, three of four of whom I was blessed to know. Two of whom were alive to see me elected — that's my Grandma and Grandpa Tracey. And the one that remains, Grandpa Tracey, he's 95 years old living in a special care home

in Weyburn, who has been to this building I think twice in his life — the second being my first swearing-in in 2006, and the first time being in nineteen . . . the first time being when the NDP introduced Bill No. 42 in 1973 that decimated the oil industry. It's the only political thing I'm going to say today. Grandpa's memory is still pretty good, although from time to time he has to distinguish me from the other grandsons by asking if I'm the politician. We're going to have to work on something new, Grandpa.

My brother and my sister and their families have supported me from day one. Mr. Speaker, rumour has it that on the night of the 2011 election, the Tommy Douglas statue in Weyburn was wearing a Dustin Duncan campaign shirt, and that my brother may or may not have been involved. I can neither confirm nor deny this. Thanks, Dallas and Meagan, for all your support.

Mr. Speaker, a word about my parents. One of the most surreal moments was in 2017, as Minister of Energy and Resources, to be in beautiful St. Andrews by-the-Sea at an FPT [federal-provincial-territorial] on behalf of the people of this province, knowing that somewhere in southeast Saskatchewan my dad was at work, helping to move the oil that we produce in this province for the very same company that he started with in 1976 with not much more than a grade 8 education. Upon my election in 2006, the very first words I said to our gathered supporters in Weyburn was, "Not too bad for the son of a truck driver from Halbrite." I love you, Dad, and I hope that I've made you proud.

Mr. Speaker, our parents did the best with what they had. And my mom made many sacrifices along the way. By the time she was 19 she had a snot-nosed toddler — that would be my aforementioned brother — and a sweet, sweet precious babe on her hip. That would be me. And Meagan would come along into our lives a couple years later. Could she have imagined that that baby would someday have a desk 26 inches away from the Premier of Saskatchewan? Mom, this season has come to a close, so you can stop worrying. Although I'm going to be unemployed in a couple months, so you might worry about that. But thank you for all your love and support.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot begin to describe the role that Amanda has played in my life. The bride of my youth, literally. This July we will celebrate our 25th wedding anniversary. Mr. Speaker, these past 25 years have not been easy. I haven't made them easy. But I am incredibly fortunate that she refused to allow me to settle for anything less than my best for myself, for her, and for our family.

Proverbs asks, "Who can find a virtuous and capable wife? She is more precious than rubies." And she is. She has given me so many incredible gifts, but I think the four that mean the most to me are . . . Well three of them are sitting next to her, and the fourth is that she has allowed me to be fully known and fully loved. Thank you, Amanda. I love you, and I'm ready and excited for what's next for us.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I have a confession to make. When I first arrived here, or even in the years before that happened when standing here was but a dream, with equal parts hubris and naïveté, I thought maybe someday I could make a speech that would be remembered. I'm a student of history, and so those are the sorts of things that interest me. But with a lot of experience

and maturity, I'm content in the knowledge that not much of what I've had to say over these past 18 years will be remembered by many, including me, not more than five minutes after I walk out these doors, and I'm okay with that.

But I'm so grateful that what I'm going to say in the next few minutes will be recorded by *Hansard* so that its intended audience — and it's only an audience of three — can go back and read these words whenever they need encouragement or direction or maybe just to get a glimpse of the kind of person their dad wants to be.

Mr. Speaker, in our home we try to make a practice to speak words over our children, the things that we believe for them and in them and the things that we want to come to pass. And so to our three: one, Jack Alexander, you are the head and not the tail; Ephram Henry, you are the head and not the tail; Penelope Nalla, you are the head and not the tail.

Two, honour your mother. She has made so many sacrifices for you and for us. She has put aside her desires and ambitions. And she is so full of wisdom and if you pay attention, you'll hear it from her, like when she reminds us that there is no joy because there is no sacrifice. Why does she make these sacrifices? Because she wants you to know joy, not just happiness. Happiness is fleeting; joy is eternal. Honour your mother.

Three, I hope and trust and pray that each of you will find a partner to share your life with like I have found in her, and when you do, share everything with that person — your hopes and your dreams and your fears and your failures and the things that bring you shame. To be 99 per cent known is to be unknown. To be 99 per cent known is to be unknown.

Four, never ever be afraid to ask for help. Asking for help is never a sign of weakness. It's always a sign of strength and I wish, I sure wish I would've learned that sooner.

And last, but first: love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. He is never against you. He is always for you. And so will I be. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Finance.

Hon. Ms. Harpauer: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well like the member from Kindersley, I did not want to write this speech, and I hate delivering speeches. I hate writing speeches. And to this day I'm still very nervous giving a speech. And unlike the member from Weyburn-Big Muddy, I cannot name a bunch of names in my speech or I will be a blithering idiot on the floor, crying. So I am going to avoid doing that and talk to individuals one on one.

But how do you sum up 25 . . . what will be this fall 25 years in 20 minutes? Even at two minutes per year that's 50 minutes, and we all need to hunker in a little bit. But at different touchpoints throughout our lives, we come to a fork in the road, and which path we choose will determine where our lives go. And 1999 was such a time.

I lived in a swing riding. It had been Liberal; it had been NDP; it had been Conservative. And I had voted anything but NDP. I hated vote splitting. I understood vote splitting, and so if I

thought the Conservative could win over the NDP, I voted Conservative; if I thought the Liberal could win over the NDP, I voted for the Liberal.

And then there was organization meetings for this new party, and I attended two of them. And after the second one, I was invited to go to the bar with Bob Bjornerud and June Draude. And at that time, as we sat in the bar, they asked me if I would consider running, which was a ridiculous idea. I was a stay-at-home housewife and very actively involved in the family farm. I was the equipment operator, quite frankly, all the way through harvest. And it had never, ever occurred to me to look at political life.

Not too long after, June asked me to meet her for coffee at a restaurant, and you know, we had a good chat. And at the end, she slid an envelope across the table. She said, read this and let me know. And in the envelope was what it would take to become an MLA. And she phoned me afterwards. And I thought, you know, it'd be an experience. I wouldn't win. It was held at the time by an NDP cabinet minister, Eric Upshall. And I thought, but you know, it would be a great experience. It would be something that I could gain some experience at and I could meet different people. And quite frankly, it just isn't good enough to sit around and complain at the kitchen table, so at least I would become active in the process.

I told my dad. My mom had passed away a number of years before that. I told my dad. He stopped talking to me because I was running for the party that killed his beloved Lynda Haverstock, because he loved that woman so much. And so he quit talking to me. We talk about this family support. That was it — my dad quit talking to me. But I decided to run.

There was no organization whatsoever. There was \$800 in the Conservative riding that they were willing to put up. And so there were six of us sitting around the kitchen table. So we've got \$800, a candidate that has no clue what she's going to do, what she's doing. And what should we do? Well we each wrote a cheque for \$1,000. So I had \$6,800. Life is good.

There were no templates or signs. There was no brochures. I was told I had to get a campaign manager, so I did. I think I seen him once after that somewhere along the line through the campaign. Asked my neighbour if he'd be my business manager. And I hit the doorsteps with my girls. My girls were 10, 13, and 15 at the time. I think everybody thought we were Fuller Brush salesmen or Amway, one or the other, because here we were. I'd load them up in the vehicle and away we'd go. And we'd go door knocking with myself and the three girls.

And then September 16, election night, there was a gathering with people that had supported me through the campaign. And the media declared the NDP won. They declared that Eric Upshall won. And yeah, that's what I expected. Like that's . . . Except the media was wrong, and they retracted both. And holy crap, I was elected as the MLA for, at that time, the Watrous constituency.

The outcome of that election was the Liberals had four seats, the Sask Party had 25 seats, the NDP had 29 seats, and the Sask Party had more of the popular vote than the NDP. And the statement that I will never forget was Elwin Hermanson who was the leader

of the Saskatchewan Party at that time, and he said this. He said, we may not have won the prize but we sure surprised the winners. And indeed we did.

Because if you took the Sask Party seats and the Liberal seats and added them together, they equalled the NDP seats. If the NDP declared a Speaker, they were outvoted. So it was within days that a couple of things happened. One of the Liberal seats was overturned on a recount, but even then the NDP were in trouble as far as holding the vote in the House. So within days a coalition government was struck with the NDP and the Liberals, and it was announced. And that was the last time the Liberals held a seat, was after that election.

The other thing that happened that fall was there was an emergency session called due to the unrest in the agriculture community on two fronts. One was the taxation, the property tax on farm land. The farmers had said enough is enough. There was a tax revolt. But even more so there was a great deal of unhappiness with the farm support program at that time. So they called an emergency session.

[17:15]

When I was first elected, there weren't fall sessions. There were only spring sessions. And I was no sooner elected and we were going into a fall session. And I remember thinking to myself, that was not in June Draude's brown envelope. That was not in there. I had no clue what I had gotten myself into. I was so overwhelmed, and I was leaving my girls behind. I cried, I swear, for the first six months. Driving to Regina I'd cry half the way, leaving the girls behind.

And I'm a Christmas fanatic. And here we are going into a fall session, and I am a Christmas fanatic. And my girls must have known, even though they were so young, that I was traumatized. And they bought me one of those little 6-inch Charlie Brown Christmas trees out of the dollar store and put it on my desk in the building.

So we're in the Assembly in this session, and I go back to my office and where that tree stood was a little sticky note and it said "crime scene," and the tree was gone. And I found out that this young, smart-alecky guy called Brad Wall had taken my tree. So I waited till he was in the Assembly. I completely stripped his office of all of his Elvis paraphernalia. I took his TV. I took his computer. I took everything, hid it everywhere, outlined where everything went with tape, and then outlined a dead body on the floor. I got the yellow tape, taped up his doorway with "do not cross" and waited for him to come back. And he never, ever took anything out of my office again. So that was 1999, so we only have 24 more years to go here, guys.

From 2000 to 2003, we only had spring sessions. There weren't fall sessions. The government would call when session would start and the opposition would decide when session would end. We did all of the budget estimates in Committee of the Whole. We sat from Monday to Friday, and we sat the full hours that is intended.

I spent at least the first two years just listening and absorbing what was said by those that were there before me. And one of those that I really admired, didn't agree with him, but admired

him because he commanded the room and he ultimately . . . you had to respect the man, was Roy Romanow. When he entered this Assembly he was a presence, and I would sit there in awe listening to him, even if I didn't agree with him.

And one time I entered a 75-minute debate, and I didn't even realize they asked questions after a 75-minute debate. That's how prepared I was. So then I was asked a really awkward question, didn't know what to do but, boom, Roy Romanow came in the room. He eviscerated me and what I had to say. And when we left, Bob Bjornrud said, man, you sure took one for the team. Way to go.

In about the year 2004 the changes were started to be made. That's when we went to the two sessions and the committee structure that we have today.

And then in the election, November 7th, 2007, another very memorable election obviously for myself. The NDP won 20 seats and the Sask Party had 38 seats, and we formed government. Brad Wall became the Premier and his comment was also profound and I will always remember it, and that is, hope beats fear every time.

I immediately became the Social Services minister, and once again I'm overwhelmed. But I also found it was so rewarding to be the Social Services minister. It was during that time that we made the decision to accelerate the developmental group homes for individuals who had disabilities because there were 440 individuals on a wait-list that was left by the NDP and the families were getting desperate because they were aging with their adult children in their homes. We also did the same for expanding spaces for children in care because the NDP had allowed 21 children in one foster home alone. And if they do not believe that, they need to read *A Breach of Trust*, which was the Children's Advocate report at the time.

But my most memorable day was the day that we announced the SAID program, the Saskatchewan assured income for disabilities program. It was basically having a separate program from what was deemed at that time "welfare." We now call it "income assistance." And the individuals with disabilities and their families wanted this program so badly because they wanted the dignity of a separate income stream that wasn't considered welfare. And I will never forget the day that I announced it, because there was tears in that room and so much gratitude. And that will stay with me forever.

Since that time, I've held a number of portfolios, all of them interesting. All of them have been a huge learning curve. All of them have opened my mind and expanded my knowledge, and with all of them I got to work with the most amazing and dedicated public service individuals.

I always viewed the officials in every ministry I have as part of the team. I did not feel they worked for me. We were a team, and we were all heading the province in the same direction, which is forward. And I have been well served. Saskatchewan is well served by the men and women who work in our public service, and I thank them all. Also, in the different ministries, I got to meet with most amazing people, leaders in communities, people that do volunteer work, individuals in every stripe of life right across the province. And I appreciate the opportunity that I've

had in order to meet all of those amazing people.

I've run in six elections, and I door knocked countless doors. And in one of the elections, there had been a boundary change. And I couldn't figure out the new boundaries, and I may have convinced some of Don Morgan's constituents that they really were in Donna Harpauer's riding and that they should vote for me. And they didn't think so, but I had them convinced by the time I left the doorstep.

But in return, Don Morgan had his signs in my riding, and I'm not sure he got the boundaries mixed up. He just likes putting his signs all over the place. And what he definitely liked doing was poaching all the workers I had on the west side of my constituency and had no shame for doing that. He'd pull them into his campaign.

I remember knocking so many doors in Dustin's riding, and I swear every third door was someone who taught Dustin. I don't know how long he went to school, but it was amazing. You would go to this door, "Yeah, I know Dustin Duncan. I taught him." And I thought, how many teachers can one guy have? It's just incredible.

You know, throughout my career I have served with six different Lieutenant Governors; eight different Speakers; four Sask Party leaders, if we remember Lyle as an interim leader; eight NDP leaders, two of them are interim; 13 chiefs of staff; many ministerial office staff; many, many, many staff without the building; and of course so many MLAs.

And that is where I can't single them out because I'll get emotional. Amazing. What an amazing team. I definitely can't talk about the two premiers, so I'll have talk to them separately because I'll just cry.

So when I look back I just, I find it so surreal. Who knew. Small-town girl, wasn't involved in politics. I was not that person that followed politics and wanted this her whole life. I was raised in a house, as Delbert talked about, with no running water. It was heated with wood and coal. I said coal. I should . . . I don't know. It was heated with coal.

But I had parents who told me that the sky was the limit, and I was 100 per cent totally responsible for reaching for it. They taught me humility, gratitude, keep an open mind, stay grounded, remember where you come from, keep your sense of humour — and there is nobody that's all that and a bag of chips — and when you come to that fork in the road, think about it and give your all to the path you chose. And that's what I chose to do.

I thank my constituents for their confidence in me all these years. I can't thank the two premiers enough. Neither one figured out that I really don't know a lot. They kept on giving me different portfolios and I'm going . . . Like I have kept them so fooled all this time, that I'm nothing special. You guys keep giving me more and I . . . It's amazing.

I want to thank all the staff in the building. They're the best. The staff and caucus through the years, and it's ironic that when I talk about thanking the caucus staff through the years, one of them was Dustin who was a staff to myself when I was in opposition.

You know, when you have a group of MLAs such as we do, you've got like a crazy, diverse group of men and women, not only career-wise but just personalities. And so it is quite amazing to me how you form such a united team that we do. And it is. It's so united and we have each other's back. I have never, even when I do screw up, I have never felt so supported than I do with this group of men and women. So thank you.

Okay, a couple of names now. I did have the opportunity to mention Susan Dunne, my constituency assistant in my introductions. And she's been with me from the start. And she is my number one fan club, but as I said if all of Humboldt could be just ticked with me and they still love Susan. Susan is just . . . she's the people's people. She is just such a wonderful person and I'm proud to have her as my friend.

So last but not least of course the three girls. You know, three of my grandchildren now are as old or older than my youngest child was when I was first elected. And I'll tell one cute story. I think I've told it once before, but for those who weren't here when I told it, Emryk, my grandson, was sitting on the end of his mom's bed watching the TV. And his mom said — my daughter Shannon who's, well, my favourite daughter some days — said what are you doing, Emryk? He said, I'm watching the Grandma Donna show. She said, say what? I'm watching the Grandma Donna show. And he's watching the legislative channel at home. I think he was about four at the time.

And so the Grandma Donna show has come to an end but the legislature will continue. And I have been honoured to be able to be here for as long as I have, representing an amazing constituency, and supported by amazing people. I love the province and always will. Saskatchewan's best days are still ahead and I'm looking forward to them. Thank you.

The Speaker: — I recognize the Minister of Government Relations.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Well, well. It is past 5. It's actually 5:30. You can all go home now because it'll be much easier to deliver this speech in a vacant room. But I don't think that's going to happen.

What amazing speeches. Like being last after all of that, it's really, really difficult. And I guess I can say, Donna, so much of what you said brought back so many memories. Unbelievable.

But you know, we all get into this business probably not really knowing what we're getting into. Maybe some keeners know, but I certainly didn't know. And you know, I had lived my life. I farmed and I worked off the farm. And I didn't need a lot of help from other people. If I was going to, you know, put in a crop, I knew what I was doing. And if I needed help, you maybe have one . . . get one person to help load a water . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Thanks, Don.

[17:30]

An Hon. Member: — I knew I hadn't shut it off.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Have I bored you already?

You might ask a friend to come and help load a water tank or

whatever it was. But you know, when you get into politics and you run that first campaign, my heavens, do you ever need a lot of help. And it's amazing how people just come and help. I was quite, quite fascinated.

And I remember that first campaign vividly, just like yourself. We didn't have a lot of support. I was running against a cabinet minister and really didn't think I had much of a chance. It was three parties at the time. Thank heavens there was a strong Liberal. That kind of got me across the line. But you know, just so many people that were friends that stepped up and helped.

You know, my first campaign team was Clay Reich who was my business manager. I had a campaign manager quite a bit like yours, Donna, that I saw . . . didn't really show up that very much. Vonni Widdis was a person in the community that helped out. She ended up being my constituency assistant. So we got that first campaign under way.

But one fellow has kind of stood beside me all the way through — and we all have those one or two people — and it was Bill Missal from Lang, Saskatchewan. And he was at every campaign meeting, and if I ever needed somebody to go door knocking, Bill was always that guy.

And there were so many different campaign teams then too. I mean I've been on six, and it's amazing to watch the maturity of the party from that first election. The party had never run in an election before. The Sask Party had never been a party that had run in a general election, so the party was learning. And we were all pretty new candidates. I guess there was 10 that had been elected before, 11 including Wayne Elhard, that had been elected before but through different parties — Conservative Party, Liberal Party. Wayne Elhard was our first elected member.

And the party has grown and matured, and certainly we did as a constituency. And I've had so many great campaign managers, but the one constant was Bill was at every campaign for six campaigns. But you know, I see John Saltasuk, who ran a couple of campaigns and Alanna Koch and Donna Strudwick and Alicia Bay. Really, really fortunate to have a strong team around me and, you know, I could probably take the 20 minutes that I'm allotted . . . And I'm going to stay to the 20 except I forgot to start my clock already, but I'm sure somebody's keeping track. I could probably use 20 minutes just to talk about the different campaign stories, the door knocking in rural Saskatchewan.

I remember I thought, I'm going to start there. I'm going to door knock rural Saskatchewan. If you got to five farms in day . . . because you just could not get away. Once you got past the dogs and got to the farmhouse, you just couldn't get away from them. And it was amazing. And so then we started door knocking in the different communities because we weren't getting much ground covered in rural Saskatchewan.

And I remember the first town I door knocked, the very first town was Kronau. And it stuck in my mind because that night I didn't think, I really didn't think I was going to win. But the results started to come in and the first town, first poll they showed on TV was Kronau and I won that poll. And I couldn't believe it because I said, I don't know anybody in Kronau, but I thought, that's why I won the poll.

And every election after that, every election, the first town I door knocked was Kronau. So I won six elections — very, very fortunate — but I think it's the people in Kronau that were the good luck charm. With redistribution Kronau is no longer in the constituency so I am no longer running, Mr. Speaker.

I've had a lot of great constituency associations, again a little bit in reverse to the campaign team. We were a little smaller on our first campaign team and it grew, but the constituency association after I got elected, we would have constituency meetings with 15 or 20 people from around the constituency because it was novel. The Sask Party was new. There was kind of hope that this party was going to move on and form government. And so we had quite a great constituency association and, you know, lots of great presidents. And I just think of Carson Leib, who passed away a year or so ago, was my president for many, many years, and different presidents.

But the one thing that we did as a constituency association . . . And again a little bit like your story, Donna. I remember the first meeting that we went to we were going to plan a nomination meeting. And we had it in Sedley, in the drop-in centre in Sedley, and it cost \$50 to rent the hall or the drop-in centre at Sedley, which took a quarter of our bank account. We had \$200 in the bank and we had a meeting in Sedley and that took a quarter of it. How are we ever going to buy signs or anything else? But we ended up building quite a strong constituency association and were able to have a number of events. But the one event that we always did and I still get razzed for, except it's an extremely successful fundraiser. And I'd advise all of you, buy turkeys at Christmas and sell them in your constituency. I have been elected six times because of turkeys. I really have.

And it seemed like every time . . . I remember every time I'd go around the constituency and deliver these turkeys. And I always felt so weird. Here I am; I'm elected; I'm carrying a turkey up to the door that I don't even know the . . . Here's your turkey for \$100. And anyway, it was a good fundraiser, but it never seemed to fail I'd get my half-ton full of frozen turkeys and it would turn warm. And it takes me a week or two to get these turkeys, and by the time I got the last one done it's getting kind of soft. And like I'm saying, let me put it in the freezer for you because I don't want you to hold on to this turkey because I think it's thawed.

And the other one. The first time I think I was . . . I don't know why I would be in charge of buying the turkeys. I'd never bought a turkey in my life. But I went to the grocery store in Fort Qu'Appelle and the fellow said, 99 cents a pound. That's a great price for turkeys, so I got, bought all the turkeys, 99 cents a pound. And I delivered them, and I got a phone call from Bill Missal after Christmas. He goes, what were these? My turkey was missing a drumstick. Did you buy Chernobyl turkeys?

I didn't realize there was a difference between utility and grade A turkeys. And I bought everybody utility turkeys for their first one. I got grade A after that, but everybody got a utility turkey that first campaign.

Ministry officials — and again, my speech is going to mirror my good friend for 25 years — but ministry officials: I have been so well served in the different portfolios, whether it's from Health to Highways to CIC [Crown Investments Corporation of Saskatchewan] to the Crowns. Amazing, amazing people work

in those different offices.

Deputy ministers: you know, if I had any success as a Health minister for the first six years that we were government, Mr. Speaker, it was in large part because of Dan Florizone. He was just an amazing deputy minister and, as was mentioned you know, we learned a lot in opposition that we spent eight years . . . Some of us spent eight years in opposition. And we learned a lot in opposition. But we didn't learn very much compared to what you learn in government. I mean it was just a total shift.

And if it wasn't for amazing officials — deputy ministers, assistant deputy ministers, directors — we would have certainly been in trouble. There's I think only a few of us, and I think my seatmate might have been one of them, where we were doing estimates, I remember, in opposition, and I was the Health critic. Brad had named me the Health critic. And I'm going after them on a drug plan and "how could you do this" and kind of going after them, probably because I just didn't understand and they couldn't get it through my head. But I was kind of going after them.

And four months later, that same official — and it was Max Hendricks who is the deputy minister of Finance right now — Max was in my office briefing me as assistant deputy minister of Health. So not many people get to be a critic and kind of go after the officials, and turn around and trust them, absolutely trust everything that they said.

And I said to Max, I said, you know, Max, I'm really sorry about kind of going after you and pushing you on the drug plan. And he said, you know, I wasn't really understanding what you were trying to ask me and that's why the answers were so bad. Because you know, I was trying to learn and trying to question him. And anyway, we have been so very well served with the officials that we've had serving our government.

My ministry office: and I see there's a number of people in the gallery. I'm a little bit like you. I don't know if I can start naming them. But I was very, very fortunate to have great staff within my ministry. And I remember — Don, you said the date — I remember when we had our first cabinet meeting. Cabinet was selected and we had our first cabinet meeting. I had never been in the cabinet room in my eight years in opposition. I decided I do not want to go in that room unless we have the right to go in that room.

In fact I never had been on the third floor of this building in eight years, and I had never been in the cabinet office or the cabinet room. But we had a cabinet meeting and, you know, we already knew which ministry roles we were going to be in, but we were kind of read a bit of the riot act and we had — what were they called? — letters, mandate letters. And we were given those and then they said, okay, go back to your office. And so I went back to my office. It was just down the hall from 304, whatever it is. And I remember walking in there and there was just one person sitting in an office kind of off to the side. And so I walk in and I introduce myself. And his name was Perry Martin. He was my first chief of staff. And I thought, my God, is this it? Like, I'm a minister now and I have just Perry Martin.

So the next day Perry had to do something. He had come from Ontario and served our government so well as chief of staff and

different responsibilities. But the next day Perry had to be away and I said, don't worry, I can come in and I guess I'll answer the phones. I don't know. I've never been in a minister's office before. And I was just praying that the phone would not ring. And it did.

And so here I am. I go, "Hello, Minister McMorris's office. Can I help you?" And we're going kind of back and forth, you know. Well it was a lady and she said, "I'd like to set up a meeting with Minister McMorris." And I go, well we can maybe work on that. When were you thinking of getting together? And she named a few possible dates. And I said, well maybe that's a possibility.

And then she goes, "Don, is that you?" It was a comms person for the SRNA [Saskatchewan Registered Nurses' Association] and I'd gone to school with her all my life — Maureen. And I go, "Is that you, Maureen?" "Yeah. Is that you, Don? Why are you answering your own phone?" Because we have no staff.

But I remember that first office staff. We ended up getting a couple admin assistants and a comms director and so on. And I thought, we're good, good for four years. That's all we need. That's the staff for the next four years.

And as Donna said, I don't know how many chiefs I've had since then. Like it turns over. This building revolves and evolves so, so readily. So as much as you try not to get attached to your staff, because they are so, so important — and I've been served with so many great chiefs of staff and admin assistants and all the people — you try not to get attached, but you do. And it's always difficult when there's a change.

But the one thing that I've noticed so, so readily in this building is change happens often. And so you better enjoy the time that you have when you're together and build that camaraderie because it's not going to be there forever. So very, very fortunate with office staff. And so I just wanted to thank them all and without naming too many of them.

But constituents: I want to talk a little bit about the constituents. And the one common theme that — I don't know how many of us — 14 or 15 of us have all talked, it's about the people. And it's about the people you represent. And I've been very, very lucky to represent Indian Head-Milestone for 25 years, Mr. Speaker. But that hasn't been just kind of a static group of people.

I remember when I was first elected, the community of Montmartre, I didn't know very many people in Montmartre. And you spend four years of, you know, dealing with their phone calls and going to potlucks — fowl suppers, not potluck suppers — fowl suppers. You deal with all of that and you really become attached. And it's difficult when you go through redistribution. And so Montmartre was pulled away. And you know, I wasn't able to . . . I mean, you still stay in touch with some of them, but you just don't have the bond.

But the best part is you get a new community. And then I was able to . . . Balgonie was put in the constituency of Indian Head-Milestone, as well as a number of other communities: Avonlea, Rouleau. And again, you get real strong relationships with so many of the constituents. Yeah, and then one other last redistribution, and I had Pilot Butte and lost a number of communities.

This new redistribution . . . and the candidate is in the gallery. He's got a great . . . I always think it's the best constituency. It has Pilot Butte, White City, Emerald Park, Balgonie, Fort Qu'Appelle, Qu'Appelle. It's dense in population, right close to the capital city, but it doesn't have to deal with any of the capital city issues, which is really nice. So it's a great constituency to represent.

Colleagues, so many great colleagues. And boy, I don't know why we're following each other, Donna, but you said so many different . . . There has been 98 people elected under the Sask Party banner since 1999. Wayne Elhard was the first one, and then there were 17 of us brand new MLAs that came in in 1999. And it's amazing to think of the 98 people that we've been able to — yourself included, Mr. Speaker — that we've been able to get to know, and absolutely great people.

[17:45]

Everyone, you know, comes in here for the right reason. Sometimes this place can eat a person up. Sometimes it's difficult. Very often it's difficult. And I think part of the problem and part of the — not problem — part of the bond that we all share is because when I'm out in the Indian Head-Milestone constituency, there's not too many people I can talk to that is going through the day that we're going through as an elected official. Maybe there's a little more closeness in the city. But there's only 61 of us in the province. And you don't go down the street and talk . . . if a teacher talked to another teacher or a labourer talked to another labourer. There's only us.

And for me, those early caucus meetings were crucial because you got off your island and you got to be around a team, because you know, you're kind of off by yourself representing a constituency, a rural constituency. And I think no doubt that is why the camaraderie and the bond between colleagues is so great.

As was mentioned before, I've had the opportunity to serve with three really great leaders — Elwin Hermanson, of course Brad Wall. Brad and a number of us were elected at the same time in 1999. We thought we were going to win in 2003 and we didn't. And I don't know if, as some people have said about fate and how important that is . . . I believe it was fate. I don't think maybe we were quite ready to govern then, even though it was so, so frustrating and we were so close. Changed leader, and Brad became leader. He changed kind of people's responsibilities, and I guess the rest, as they say, is history.

But early on — I'm just going to have a quick drink here, sorry — early on, I had the opportunity under Elwin to serve in the leadership role, and I remember walking into the building the first time and the first caucus meeting. And I'd followed politics a fair amount, but you walk into a room and you're sitting at a table with Ken Krawetz, Rod Gantefoer, Bob Bjornerud, June Draude, Don Toth, Dan D'Autremont, Bill Boyd, Ben Heppner — all guys that had founded the party — and how that was just awe-inspiring.

And I had the fortune that Elwin Hermanson named me the Whip shortly after we'd got elected, only about six months. And I had the opportunity — and I know Nancy's in the gallery — to spend every caucus meeting beside Ben Heppner. And he was our caucus Chair, and he was a great guy.

But at the end of every meeting — and Mr. Speaker, I think you'll remember this — but almost at the end of every meeting Ben would tell a joke. And they were the corniest jokes you'd ever want to hear. And you could just see Ben, when everybody's just shaking their head, he would walk out of there the happiest. If he actually made us laugh because it was a good joke, he was a failure. He had the corniest jokes. But he was such a good mentor. All those eight members that were first elected were such great mentors to us.

And so I've had the opportunity then to see other members come in. And I think if there is one thing that, I don't know, I've tried to do — I don't know if I've been successful — is to try and help new members find their way because it's not an easy place to find your way around. And you know, so I don't know if I was successful, but if I was it was because of the people that came before us that helped show us the way. And we were very, very fortunate.

I mentioned colleagues just before the next part because you do become family. But I want to also recognize my family. And Cindy, thank you for being here very, very much. We don't serve alone, obviously, and Cindy has never been kind of one for the spotlight. That's not what she likes. And she's picked an unusual partner and had some boys that have kind of garnered some spotlight, even though that is the exact opposite of certainly what she wanted.

But you know, we are away at times, and we became government. And the boys were getting older but, you know, if they've got great personalities and are respectful and everything else it was in large part because Cindy was the one that was there raising them, certainly a lot more than I was. So I want to thank you for allowing me to pursue my dreams and then allow me to get sometimes the benefit of when people compliment me or us on our boys. Because it was certainly more her than I.

You know, and the boys were never really all that interested in politics. I wonder why. But they certainly pursued other things. But for me, they — my boys, Don — for me, they actually were extremely good political allies. Because for me often people would say, instead of having to talk politics all the time, how are the boys? And people must have thought maybe they shouldn't be asking it, but it was the best political question I could have ever got. And certainly talk about their accomplishments and how they've fared.

Quickly to my constituency assistants. So family is extremely important, the most important, but the second person of your family really does, and was mentioned, does become your constituency assistant. They really do, not control your life, but make sure that you're going in the right direction. And I've been blessed, I've only had two constituency assistants. Vonni was my first CA.

And it was interesting because in . . . They farmed, her and her husband Alan farmed right close to where we farm, and she used to work in the city. So she'd drive from the farm back into Regina like five days a week. Then they decided to sell the farm. They sold the farm, right the same time as I got elected. They sold the farm, moved into Regina. And I said, Vonni, will you be my constituency assistant back in Sedley? So she'd spent all her time driving into Regina for work, sold the farm, moved into Regina,

and then spent the next eight years driving back out to Sedley to be my constituency . . . actually four years in Sedley and four years in Balgonie.

And then, of course, Nicole who's sitting in the gallery. And everybody says they have the best constituency assistant but they don't. I do. And Nicole has been, as many of them are, they're certainly more than just an employee. They become partners. They become very, very good friends, best friends. And they really do have our backs, they really do. And Vonni for sure and Nicole over the last 17 years.

Two Wednesdays ago we had our nomination meeting, I believe it was two Wednesdays ago. And I said, "Nicole, how are you feeling?" She said, "I have a pit in my stomach. I don't know; I'm just not feeling good." And she finally said to me the next day, you know, "I've never been through a divorce" — and neither have I — "but I kind of feel this is a start of a divorce." Seventeen years together and I said, "Well it is going to be difficult and it is going to be different." But I phone her every day, and I said, "When I'm not the MLA, can I still phone you every day?" So maybe that will help a little bit.

I've had the luxury of serving in many different portfolios, starting with the Health ministry. And you know, if I ever am asked what is your favourite portfolio — you know, I've been Highways and CIC and different things — Health was by far the best portfolio. And I know to the Health ministers, you've all experienced it. It's tough, tough times at times, but it is the portfolio that I think you make the biggest difference in people's lives. And it was the best.

I was at an event this morning with WCB [Workers' Compensation Board]. And I've mentioned this story a couple times; I hate when they do an introduction and they introduce you and they read off all the different responsibilities that you've had. Because if you've been here forever, which I have, you tend to get a lot of responsibility. And it went on and on; it seemed like forever he's doing this bio and reading, you know, the different responsibilities.

And I always remember back and I, again, said this story a couple times. But my father-in-law, we were at a meeting one time and reading a bio of somebody that had accomplished a lot but had quite a long bio. And Leo just kind of whispers to me and he says, anybody that's had to do that many things couldn't have been very good at any of them. And I kind of think maybe that might have been my role. I'm not sure I was very good at any of them. But I've had a lot of different ones.

But you know, the accomplishments in health; the accomplishments in highways; you know, SLGA [Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority], and Donna started it with the privatization on the SLGA, and I certainly was that minister; and the privatization of ISC [Information Services Corporation of Saskatchewan] — we just had a lot of different portfolios and responsibilities. And I've been very, very fortunate to be supported, as I said, by the different officials, that if I've had success, it was mainly driven by them for sure.

And I'm not going to get into kind of the different things that we did, but I'm going to kind of shift gears a little bit. And I wasn't sure I was going to do it, but every one of my speeches that I've

done here over the last 25 years I think kind of tries to look at some positive and look at some negative. And I usually end up trying to kind of go after the NDP. And that's kind of what I like doing the best.

So I'm sorry. I heard some of our MLAs and they're so gracious. Dustin, you're amazing. And I wish I could be like you, honestly I do, but I can't. So I'm sorry, but I'm going to have to go after the NDP a little bit. You know, I've heard them say over the last couple weeks or months, they'll ask a person, are you better now than you were five years ago, eight years ago? Are you better now, better off now than you were?

And you know, we can all go . . . I could be asked that question and, you know, that answer may change. But I think the real question is not about an individual. I think that the question is, is Saskatchewan better off today than it was under the NDP? My answer is, damn rights it is.

Let me try that again. Is Saskatchewan better off today than it was under the NDP?

Some Hon. Members: — Yeah.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Yeah, okay. Now we're on a roll.

Saskatchewan was only one of two provinces when we came to government that didn't have a children's hospital. This government had built the Jim Pattison Hospital on the shores of the Saskatchewan River, connected to the university, Mr. Speaker.

We have built a hospital, a psychiatric hospital in North Battleford. I toured it for years, for a couple years. It was 110 years old and it was an absolute disgrace, Mr. Speaker. We built a new hospital in Moose Jaw. We built a new hospital in Humboldt. We've got a hospital coming up in Weyburn, and we're building a new hospital in Prince Albert. I ask the question: when it comes to health infrastructure, is Saskatchewan better off today than it was under the NDP?

Some Hon. Members: — Yeah.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Come on you guys. Damn rights it is.

Okay, let's try that again. No, but something different. Health human resources. Talk about health human resources in here all the time, Mr. Speaker. When we were government we had half, less than half the seats for nurses that we do today. We had less than half the seats for doctor training than we do today. We didn't have a registered psychiatric nurses program in this province. I think we had one nurse practitioner practising in this province. We didn't have midwives practising in this province. When it comes to health human resources, Mr. Speaker — stick with me, guys — is Saskatchewan better off today than it was under the NDP?

Some Hon. Members: — Damn right it is.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — All right. Mr. Speaker, when it comes to education, 176 school closures. Compare that with 68 or 69 brand new schools, over 100 renovations, Mr. Speaker. Contrast that with the days of the NDP, and you guys can, you guys can

join in too. Is Saskatchewan better off today than it was under the NDP?

Some Hon. Members: — Damn right it is.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — That's right. Highways, ooh. Let's go from . . . Highways. There used to be a community that would get, every spring, get their shovels out. They'd get some cold mix from Highways, and they'd go repair their own potholes so people could get into Maple Creek. That's what the highways were like.

Now we hear the NDP with their one brainwave idea of taking \$500 million out of the highways budget. Mr. Speaker, this government has built bypasses at Balgonie, White City, Pilot Butte, Martensville, Warman. Mr. Speaker, we put passing lanes all across this province, Mr. Speaker. When it comes to highways infrastructure, is Saskatchewan better off today than it was under the NDP?

Some Hon. Members: — Damn right it is.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — That's right. I don't know how much more I should do of this, but . . . You kind of getting the point? And you can join in.

When it comes to the economy, let's go to the economy because none of that, none of that is possible without a growing economy. You have to have a growing economy. And I was trying to think of like an analogy about how important the economy is for everything else, you know, Mr. Speaker, and I decided talking with . . . okay, real quick.

You know what, I don't know why but I've got into like . . . The member from Kindersley is really going to go nuts on me because of, number one, the car I'm driving, and number two, I'm going to compare the economy to like a bulb. Not a light bulb, but a bulb like a flower like, you know, a bulb, a garlic bulb or whatever. And it stores energy. And if it lays dormant, and that bulb, compared to the economy, laid dormant for 16 years, Mr. Speaker. But that bulb, if it's given the right conditions, can produce.

[18:00]

And if it's the economy is the bulb and it's given the right fertilizer, the right ground soil temperature, the right everything, it flourishes and will produce beautiful flowers. But in our case, it flourishes and allows investment into our province. It allows population into our province, more jobs.

Mr. Speaker, the economy is the root of everything that is good about this province, and we can never forget it. So if you want to compare economies, is Saskatchewan better off today than it was under the NDP?

Some Hon. Members: — Damn right it is.

Hon. Mr. McMorris: — Mr. Speaker, it has been an absolute honour to stand many different spots in this House, many different spots — opposition for sure and a number of different spots — to be able to put my thoughts on the record as to what makes this province so good, why I love this province so much,

what will increase the standard of living in this province.

Mr. Speaker, I've been very, very blessed to have represented the people of Indian Head-Milestone for 25 years. I'm going to miss it, most of it. I'm going to miss you. There's certain parts of it I won't miss. But after 25 years, Mr. Speaker, I'm going to take my seat right now because damn rights, it's time. Thank you.

The Speaker: — The Premier has moved:

That this Assembly give thanks to retiring members of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan for their service and dedication to the people of their constituencies and the province.

Is it the pleasure of the Assembly to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Speaker: — Carried. Now it's past the hour of adjournment. This House stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow.

[The Assembly adjourned at 18:03.]

GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

CABINET MINISTERS

Hon. Scott Moe
Premier
President of the Executive Council
Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs

Hon. Lori Carr
Minister of Highways

Hon. Jeremy Cockrill
Minister of Education

Hon. Dustin Duncan
Minister of Crown Investments Corporation
Minister Responsible for the Public Service Commission
Minister Responsible for SaskEnergy Incorporated
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Government Insurance
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Power Corporation
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Telecommunications
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Water Corporation
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Liquor and Gaming Authority

Hon. Bronwyn Eyre
Minister of Justice and Attorney General

Hon. Joe Hargrave
Minister of SaskBuilds and Procurement
Minister Responsible for the
Global Transportation Hub Authority

Hon. Donna Harpauer
Deputy Premier
Minister of Finance

Hon. Jeremy Harrison
Minister of Trade and Export Development
Minister of Immigration and Career Training
Minister Responsible for Innovation
Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan

Hon. Everett Hindley
Minister of Health

Hon. Gene Makowsky
Minister of Social Services

Hon. David Marit
Minister of Agriculture
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Crop Insurance Corporation
Minister Responsible for
Saskatchewan Water Security Agency

Hon. Tim McLeod
Minister of Mental Health and Addictions,
Seniors and Rural and Remote Health

Hon. Don McMorris
Minister of Government Relations
Minister of Labour Relations and Workplace Safety
Minister Responsible for
First Nations, Métis and Northern Affairs
Minister Responsible for the
Provincial Capital Commission
Minister Responsible for the
Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board

Hon. Paul Merriman
Minister of Corrections, Policing and Public Safety
Minister Responsible for the Firearms Secretariat

Hon. Jim Reiter
Minister of Energy and Resources

Hon. Laura Ross
Minister of Parks, Culture and Sport
Minister Responsible for the Status of Women
Minister Responsible for
Lotteries and Gaming Saskatchewan Corporation

Hon. Christine Tell
Minister of Environment

Hon. Gordon Wyant
Minister of Advanced Education